

POLITICAL ALTERNATIVES IN INDIA

Edited by
RAMDAS G. BHATKAL

Contributors

S. G. Barve □ S. G. Sardesai
Balraj Madhok □ N. G. Goray & Surendranath Dwivedi
Madhu Limaye □ M. R. Masani



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PREFACE

The Popular Election Guides were conceived out of a conviction that the democratic process requires a continuous reconsideration of the various political alternatives which the people face. No doubt the political parties publish their manifestoes and other literature. But the manifestoes give broadly a framework of the party's programme. To know, therefore, each party's attitude and stand on specific issues, it was considered necessary to present a questionnaire to the leading members from each multi-State party and to allow them to spell out their policy and programme. The interview method could have, probably, introduced greater uniformity, but it would have also brought in the interviewer's bias. A common questionnaire was therefore sent to the authors (See Note on Contributors) and they were requested to write on their party programme in about 35,000 words with reference to the questionnaire. The wide disparity in the length of the replies does not in any way indicate the editor's preferences.

I wish to thank Shri A. S. Raman, Shri N. G. Joag and Dr. A. R. Desai for their guidance in drawing up the questionnaire. Thanks are also due to the contributors to this volume who in spite of the tremendous pressure of work involved in an Election year, found time to write for us. Leaders of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) were, however, unable to respond to our request. We have, therefore, reproduced their official manifesto to speak for them.

I am also thankful to Shri Chanchal Sarkar, Shri Shankar Sarda, Shri Madhu Dandavate, Dr. V. R. Pandit, Shri S. V. Raju and Smt. Bhadra Desai for their help and encouragement.

R. G. B.

Introduction

by Ramdas G. Bhatkal

INTRODUCTION

'I am proud that the people of India should begin their independent life by subscribing to the principle tradition which we in the West call Western, but which is now something more than Western.'¹ This is the tribute paid by Ernest Barker way back in 1950. Within a year of the adoption of the Constitution of India, he used the Preamble to the Constitution to serve as the keynote to his social and political theory. In the seventeen years following, whatever be the judgement of experts on India's performance in social, economic or technological sphere, there would be near-unanimity in applauding the great democratic experiment. True, Gokhale, Pherozeshah Mehta, Ranade and other moderate had laid a firm foundation for legislative work. There were some kind of elections on limited franchise to local government units and to Provincial and Federal legislatures even before the Independence and the Indian National Congress had formed ministries in seven Provinces in 1937-39. But the introduction of universal adult franchise in 1950 was a big step forward which increased the percentage of the electorate to the total population from 10 to 55. Would the experiment succeed? Almost everything pointed to 'no' as an answer. The sheer size of the population and its wide-spread dispersal presented enormous practical difficulties. Moreover, nearly 80 per cent of the population was illiterate. Most people were still under feudal influence not only economically but socially, politically and emotionally. Multiplicity of religions, languages and cultures added to the problem of communication. On the one hand the Princes and landlords had not lost their influence and on the other hand many women were still under *purdah* and a large section of the population was considered untouchable and was even now being denied the most elementary necessities of life. In other words

¹ Barker, Ernest : *Principles of Social and Political Theory*, 1951, p. vi.

the bloodless political revolution ushered in by the Constitution of India would have large-scale and long-range economic and social implication which would make a Maharajah or an industrialist or a high caste Brahmin to come out and woo the peasant, the worker and the untouchable for votes. In spite of these heavy odds the experiment is on. The following comment by an American political scientist sums up our achievement: 'The Indian experiment in adult suffrage contrasts favourably with the limitations on the franchise including an increasing resort to indirect elections, which profess to be democratic, including the system of 'basic democracies' in Pakistan and of 'guided democracy' in Indonesia.'²

It has also to be kept in mind that universal adult franchise was introduced in the United Kingdom as late as 1949 and in America the process has just been accelerated with Johnson administration's Civil Rights Legislation. In Switzerland, one of the model democracies, women still do not have a right to vote. India, therefore, is one of the very few countries in the world which has a truly democratic set-up and is by far the largest working democracy.

In modern parliamentary democracies, elections play a key role in the democratic process. Since the people govern themselves through their elected representatives, fair and free elections become a *sine qua non* of a true democracy. Here, it is needless to go into the details of what constitutes fair and free elections and apply the tests to India. We can safely accept Norman Palmer's verdict: 'Measured by one of the severest tests—the holding of free, direct, general elections—democracy in India has worked.'³

There are, however, some recent developments which are disconcerting since they do not conform with the position that India has adopted the Western parliamentary democracy with all its elaborate system of elections as 'an act of faith'.⁴ Briefly, they indicate a loosening of the faith in parliamentary institu-

² Palmer, Norman D.: *The Indian Political System*, p. 106.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 233.

⁴ Term used by the Election Commission. See *Report on the First General Elections*.

tions. In New Delhi, in the Parliament, we find frequent challenges to the Chair and the parliamentary process. Outside the parliament many issues are being settled in the streets through 'bandhs', fasts and other forms of violent and non-violent coercion. More than that, the 1967 election campaign has been marked with a greater degree of violence. Meetings of nearly all the parties have been obstructed not by heckling but by stone-throwing, the injured including the Prime Minister of India (a Lady at that). Political murders have increased in proportion and the attack on Madhu Limaye,⁵ a S.S.P. leader, was a serious matter. A discussion on the causes and effects of these developments is beyond the scope of this essay, but it is something which has to be reckoned with. It has led important leaders such as Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia⁶ to forecast the 1967 elections as the last. This has been further corroborated by many Western observers.⁷ It is now left to the people of India and their leaders to falsify these predictions and to work their way to the welfare state through democratic means.

At least one important cause of this mood of frustration lies in the electoral process itself. For one thing, election is a very expensive affair and the parties without resources and the poor candidates have always to work at a disadvantage. This factor is, however, common to all democratic countries and no workable solution has yet been offered. The other weakness of the Indian system of elections is peculiar to India. We have a British system of elections with a political situation more akin to the continental pattern. This weighs heavily in favour of the Congress party which has a very wide base so that it has won overwhelming majorities on a minority vote in the last three elections:

	<i>percent votes</i>	<i>percent seats</i>
1952	45.02	72.40
1957	47.78	70.50
1962	45.06	73.20

⁵ Madhu Limaye is a contributor to this volume.

⁶ *Times of India*, dated January 27, 1967.

⁷ *Times*, London, dated February 3, 1967.

This has prompted the opposition parties to enter into opportunistic alliances and/or to seek to express themselves outside the Parliament. As against this it can be argued that even in England, which has only two numerically important parties it is possible for a party to form a majority government on a minority vote. (British Labour Party got elected to power in 1945 on a 46 per cent vote. Conservatives who lost obtained 48 per cent votes). Secondly, this prolonged one-party rule was a small price for the stability which has proved to be a rare commodity in newly independent States. Thirdly, the Congress party, in spite of its charismatic leadership (in fact because of the faith of this leadership in democracy), has not tried to usurp dictatorial powers. It is normal temptation for a party-in-power to try to entrench itself by constitutional means or otherwise deny some of the basic rights. But there is no doubt that Nehru with his unassailable faith in democracy deliberately fostered democratic institutions and set the Indian clock decades ahead of time. In any case, the Congress party, in spite of its stranglehold on the Indian governmental machine, has been responsive to the public opinion.

One of the questions that is often asked relates to the future of democracy in India. In the first few years after Independence, the danger seemed to be from two sources: the Princes and the Communists. Thanks to the remarkable statesmanship of Vallabhbhai Patel, the Princely States were peacefully merged in the Republic of India. However, the tactics of the Communists during that period were suspect and the Government was forced to resort to Preventive Detention legislation to maintain law and order. But due to a belated appreciation of the complexities of the Indian situation, the fear of extinction on account of a stern government policy and certain developments in the international communist movement, the Communists in India changed their tactics and compromised with the existing system of parliamentary democracy. In the process, the party has democratised itself considerably. Now, it functions in India like any other political party striving to win power through the Ballot box. Then, what is it that threatens democracy in India? The statements of the party leaders in this volume clearly indicate the inner contradictions and a wide divergence in the Indian politi-

cal scene, which threaten democracy in India.

Apart from the threat from right-wing or left-wing totalitarian elements which seemingly exist in most newly independent States there is also the remote possibility of military rule. The sheer size of the country and the federal structure are supposed to be safeguards against such threats.⁶ But then it is not inconceivable that there could be several dictatorships in different parts of the country. Such a set-up would be in keeping with India's pre-British history. But such a situation can arise only under two circumstances: There must be a strengthening of centrifugal forces and there must be irreconcilable inconsistencies in the national aspirations. The first cause need not work against democracy. It could lead to balkanisation and loosening of the federal control. But if the sharp cleavages between the various party positions represent sizeable articulate opinion in the country, then it would be difficult to resolve the differences purely by parliamentary debate.

Democracy in modern times can work only within a narrow range of objectives. With the fast pace of technological development, which has in turn accelerated changes in such other fields as mass communication, education and management, no nation can survive without a definite sense of direction. The democratic machine can function only when there is a national consensus regarding the broad general policies. No government can afford to negate or wipe out the deeds of its predecessor government. To misuse the philosophic jargon, while there can be a difference over 'means' there has to be unanimity in regard to the 'end'. To quote rather obvious instances, in the U.S.A. there is a general agreement that Communism must be contained. There are differences between the two parties and within the parties as to how this objective should be achieved. Great Britain as a nation is working towards a welfare state. To what extent should nationalisation be resorted to to achieve this is debatable. Even in matters of detail, there has to be some compromise. The Conservatives did not, in their 13-year rule, denationalise the health service nor has the Labour Government relaxed the restrictions on the coloured immigrants even though

⁶ Panikkar, K. M.: *Commonsense about India*.

they were critical of the restrictive legislation from the opposition bench. Both the parties are agreed on the desirability and the inevitability of joining the Common Market. The differences are regarding the terms of entry and the time schedule. In other words, the national interest and the national consensus determine the broad objectives before any people. In the United States of America, the policies cut across even party lines and the differences really remain only as between those who are a little more progressive and those who are not.

The basic problem of obtaining some kind of national consensus out of the congeries of regional, local, caste and communal groupings that constitute India today'⁹ is far from solved.

Hitherto, the problems arising out of lack of such a consensus were minimised because of the omnibus character of the ruling party. Just as most of us are born Hindus, whatever our personal beliefs so also most of us born before the second World War were born Congressmen whatever our politico-economic attitudes. (A Hindu may be a monotheist, pantheist or even an atheist, so also a Congressman may be a *laissez faire* protagonist, an advocate of mixed economy or a rabid fellow-traveller.) This is so, partly because the Congress for the first sixtyfive years of its existence was a mass movement with the primary objective of securing India's independence. (This was the common objective which could keep Hindu Maha Sabha on the one hand and the Socialist and Communist parties on the other as parts of the Congress organization.) But the Congress was by no means restricted to this objective. It encompassed almost all aspects of social and political life of the nation. And yet the differences within the various groups in the party were suppressed on account of the common objective. It was the wish of Mahatma Gandhi that the Congress Party should give up political activity and convert itself into a social welfare organization. He even drafted his proposal a day before his assassination. But the suggestion was rejected and the Indian National Congress, with its mammoth organization and deep roots were able to survive three elections in spite of defections and splintering. While the percentage support to the party remained within the

⁹ Palmer, Norman: *op cit.*, p. 234.

range of 42 to 47 there was hardly any doubt about the general support which the party evoked. The situation on the eve of the fourth general election is fundamentally different due to the following factors :

(1) Nehru's death: Nehru's leadership was undoubtedly the largest single factor ensuring Congress supremacy. People had a feeling that the Nation's interests as well as the future of democracy are safe in Nehru's hands.

(2) The voters whose age is less than 30 (who form a significant part of the electorate) are not emotionally committed to the Congress party or the Congress ideology and they will be playing a significant role in the elections for the first time.

(3) The new parties, most of which have their origins in the Congress, are gradually getting anchored to a definite policy. They are no more splinter groups or frustrated individuals. They have developed their own philosophy, ideology, leadership, tradition and (however small numerically yet) their own hard core. It is interesting to note that with the exception of Jana Sangh, leaders of all other political parties are ex-Congressmen¹⁰ and it has taken them some time to establish their party's identity.

The first chapter indicated in the questionnaire, therefore, tries to pinpoint the attention of the contributors to the factors which led to the formation of the respective parties as that would throw a flood of light on the basic policies of the party.

Because of these factors the 1967 elections are very different from the previous elections. There is, for the first time, a real possibility of the Congress losing to one or more of other parties in several States and at best getting only a bare working majority at the Centre. With the inner contradictions and antagonisms within the party this could lead to unstable governments and it will have to be seen whether the people of India can face this challenge and evolve solutions not only at the parliamentary level but in the context of the total democratic experiment.

Has democracy come to stay in India? 1967 elections should

¹⁰ This is true, in particular, of the leaders who have contributed to this volume, as will be obvious from the Note on Contributors.

provide the answer. In this sense this is the first real election in India and again from this point of view, what follows is of the greatest importance.

RAMDAS G. BHATKAL

QUESTIONNAIRE

CHAPTER I

Historical Background (Introductory Brief)

1. Please give a brief history of your party. What led to its formation as against the parties existing at that time? What is the *raison d'être* of the party?

Please touch upon the ideological reasons as also the organisational reasons. Has your party passed through splits, mergers, etc.?

Note : In the case of the Congress Party the important question would be :

‘What is the *raison d'être* of its continuance as a political party after the national independence movement has achieved its objective?’ This could be discussed in the light of Mahatma Gandhi’s view that Congress should have been dissolved on obtaining independence.

CHAPTER II

International Policy

1. Do you believe in a non-partisan policy?
2. What is the meaning of non-alignment? Is it desirable?
3. What steps will you take to develop and strengthen an independent and flexible policy?
4. Have you any proposals for normalising relations with China and Pakistan?
5. How do you propose to build up an independent defence structure?

CHAPTER III

Domestic Policy: Economic

1. What are your plans for the regeneration of the economy to ensure more food, more employment, lower cost of living, better housing and more of the basic amenities of life for the vast majority of the people?
2. What steps will you take to dovetail the development programme of the public and private sectors to achieve a balanced growth and diversification of industries?
3. What measures do you propose to adopt for maximising food production? What incentives will you offer to the mass of the peasantry to introduce modern production techniques?
4. How will you achieve a balance in the growth of industry and agriculture?
5. What will be your approach to nationalisation in general and as applied to banks, oil companies and Iron and Steel Industry in particular?
6. There seems to be a direct obverse relationship between the popularity of a government and the taxation it imposes. How do you propose to adopt a positive approach without hurting the people? What according to you are the major defects in the present taxation system? What are the reasons for tax evasion? How can this problem be tackled?

CHAPTER IV

Domestic Policy: Social

1. What are your plans for educational reforms, to increase the percentage of literacy, make available opportunities for higher education to a greater section of the people, and to give education a more practical bias in keeping with the needs of a development-oriented economy?
2. What are your plans for making medical facilities easily available to the majority of the people?

3. What steps will you take to remove caste, communal and regional differences to strengthen secular democracy?
4. What is your policy regarding the language question, prohibition and family planning?

CHAPTER V

Domestic Policy: Political

1. What are your proposals for strengthening democracy at the village level, and for a more active and intelligent participation of the vast majority of the people in the democratic process?
2. What are your plans for ensuring an efficient and clean administration?
3. Do you propose to initiate any changes in the constitutional structure?
4. Do you, as a matter of principle, support the linguistic States? What should be the approach in settling the boundary disputes—now and in future?
5. What should be done to prevent chauvinism?
6. Do you feel that corruption has increased to the extent of threatening our national existence? What step could you take to curb it?
7. Do you feel that students are instigated and encouraged by political parties to be violent? What steps will you take to prevent it?
8. Do you feel that the frequent *Bandh* movements may lead to anarchy?

CONTRIBUTORS

SADASHIV GOVIND BARVE (b. 1914) after studying at Bombay and Cambridge Universities joined the Indian Civil Service in 1935. He held high positions and did a variety of jobs during the next twentyfive years. During 1949-52 he was the Chief Executive of the Poona Municipal Corporation where he is still remembered for his outstanding services to the city. He has served in several important districts as Collector and District Magistrate, and as Joint Secretary and Secretary to the Government of India and the Government of Maharashtra. In 1955 he served as Secretary of the Official Language Commission. Shri Barve has served on a number of Committees and Commissions. The Maharashtra State Irrigation Commission, of which he was the Chairman, has made one of the most comprehensive studies of irrigation problems in a State of the Indian Union. In 1958, as Chairman of a Study Group, Shri Barve reported on the civic problems of Bombay city. This report has since come to be considered as the authoritative statement of the way in which the civic problems could be tackled. Shri Barve resigned from the Indian Civil Service in July 1961 to enter public life. In the 1962 elections he was elected to the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly and served as Minister of Finance and Minister of Industries and Electricity till April 1965 when he resigned his Ministership at the call of the then Prime Minister to take over as a Member of the Planning Commission. Having completed the assignment of helping to bring out the draft of the Fourth Plan Shri Barve is again resigning his office in the Planning Commission to seek election to the Lok Sabha from Bombay. Shri Barve is one of the few politicians in India who have consistently argued out, formulated and set down their precise views on different issues of public policy. He is the author of *With Malice Toward None, Good Government and Freedom and Organisation*.

SHRINIWAS G. SARDESAI (b. 1907) graduated from the University of Bombay in 1927 standing first in the B. COM. Examination. His political career started immediately thereafter. In 1928-29 he worked as political secretary to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. In 1930 he was convicted as one of the organisers of the Forest Satyagraha movement in Ahmednagar district. He joined the Communist Party in 1931 and spoke on its behalf at the Karachi Congress. During his political career ranging over thirty-seven years he has been a party organiser, trade unionist, Kisan Sabha functionary, journalist and writer. He was elected to the All-India Congress Committee from Maharashtra in 1937 and served as a member till 1946. He was first elected to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India in 1941. Shri Sardesai has spent nearly seven years in prison. Besides, he has worked for Four years as an underground political worker. His work in the Samyukta Maharashtra Movement is widely known. He has written on various subjects of national and international significance. He presented the report of the National Council of the Communist Party on problems of the international communist movement to the Seventh Congress of the C.P.I in Bombay in December 1964. He was also a member of the drafting committee of the Programme of the Party adopted at that Congress. He has represented the C.P.I. in communist conferences abroad. In 1965 he was a delegate at the Nineteen Communist Parties Consultative Conference held in Moscow and at the International Seminar of Communist Parties at Prague.

BALRAJ MADHOK (b. 1920) had his education at Lahore. He had a brilliant career securing first class at both B.A. and M.A. examinations. He began his teaching career in D.A.V. College, Srinagar. Presently he is the Head of the Department of History, D.A.V. College, Delhi. He was in the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh in his student days. He sponsored the student organisation 'Vidyarthi Parishad' and the 'Jammu-Kashmir Praja Parishad' which later merged with the Bharatiya Jan Sangh. As the head of the Kashmir youth movement he co-operated with the authorities in the vital task of defence of Srinagar in 1947. He was externed by Sheikh Abdulla for his pro-India activities in 1948. He has been associated with the Bharatiya Jana Sangh from its early

days and was its all-India Secretary before becoming its President in 1966. Prof. Madhok has widely travelled and is an expert on Chinese and South East Asian affairs. In 1961-62, he was elected to the Lok Sabha from New Delhi. He is the author of several works including *Kashmir Divided*, *Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerji—A Biography*, *Hindu Rashtra—A Study in Indian Nationalism*, *Political Trends in India* and *Kashmir—Centre of New Alignments*.

N. G. GORAY (b. 1906) plunged into the freedom struggle early in his college days, and was imprisoned in 1930, 1932, 1940 and 1942. After independence he participated in the Goa liberation movement and was sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment but was released after three years. A founder member of the Congress Socialist Party, he is today Chairman of the Praja Socialist Party. A firm believer in democracy and socialism he has been a fighter for social justice and national integrity. A powerful orator and able parliamentarian, he was a member of Lok Sabha from 1957 to 1962. He is a gifted writer and contributes regularly to the press. He has a number of books to his credit: social, political and literary, mostly in Marathi and a collection of his speeches in English.

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MADHU LIMAYE (b. 1924) entered politics in his student days in Poona. He became the Secretary of the local unit of the Socialist Party in 1939. A year later he was imprisoned by the British for his anti-war speeches. His association with Dr Ram Manohar Lohia began soon after his release from prison. He was for sometime Joint Secretary of the Party and Secretary of its Foreign Affairs Committee. He represented the party on the Asian Socialist Conference Bureau in Rangoon in 1953. When the Praja Socialist Party split Shri Limaye went with Dr Lohia and became chairman of the new Socialist party in 1958. Shri Limaye played an active role in Goa's struggle for liberation from Portuguese imperialism and served a 20 month jail term in Goa prison. Shri Limaye was returned to Lok Sabha in 1964 by-election from Bihar and has been a very effective member on the opposition bench. He is an expert on rules and procedure and has earned a reputation for preparing his 'Home Work' diligently. He is one of the principal theoreticians of the Samyukta Socialist Party.

MINOO R. MASANI, (b. 1906) author, General Secretary of the Swatantra Party of India, head of Personnel and Productivity Services, Management Consultants, Member of the Executive Committee of All-India P.E.N. Centre and a Member of the Executive Committee of the All-India Management Association, can look back on a life of varied achievement.

Shri Masani was elected Mayor of Bombay (1943), a Member of the Indian Legislative Assembly (1945), the Constituent Assembly of India (1947) and Parliament (1949 to 1951, 1957 to 1962 and since 1963). He was India's first Ambassador in Brazil (1948 to 1949), and also Chairman of the United Nations Sub-Commission for Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities (1950 to 1952).

He was one of the founders and Joint Secretary of the All-India Congress Socialist Party from its inception in 1934 to 1939, a member of the All-India Congress Committee from 1936 to 1938 and a member of the General Council of the All-India Trade Union Congress (in its non-communist days) for some time. A follower of Mahatma Gandhi and an ardent protagonist of India's national independence, Shri Masani was imprisoned for

civil disobedience activities in 1932-1933 and again in 1943.

A consistent democrat, Shri Masani is a Patron of the Liberal International.

He is the author of several books including the best-seller *Our India* and *A Communist Party of India—A Short History*.

Why Congress?

by S. G. Barve

THE CONGRESS RECORD — A RETROSPECT

The Indian National Congress was founded eighty years ago in 1885. It started originally as a platform of the liberal intelligentsia of the country. The Congress, in course of time, became a widespread popular movement. Its tempo quickened over the years and its methods underwent transformation. From appeal and petitions for the conferment of further instalments of political progress, its programme shifted over to the direct action of a mass movement. Under the epoch-making leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, it employed the novel but efficacious sanctions of '*satyagraha*' and civil disobedience.

In 1942 at the height of World War II, the Indian National Congress launched the historic 'Quit India' movement which convulsed the public life of the country. A tremendous upsurge of discontent and impatience was built up amongst the people who were ready to wrench political power from their foreign rulers by the end of World War II. Ultimately a situation was precipitated in which British power became untenable in the country. The British rulers of India had the wisdom to see how things were shaping, and independence, when it arrived finally, came with a grace which did credit to both sides. The British handed over the country with its administrative machinery as a going concern and earned in return, considerable goodwill for this final act of grace.

With independence came partition and along with it tremendous convulsions in the country. Stupendous movements of refugees involving many millions took place amidst enormous human suffering, privation and loss of property along with the commission of massacres and brutalities. On the 30th January 1948 Mahatma Gandhi, the architect of the country's freedom, the Father of the Nation, was assassinated by a

lunatically misguided, fanatical Hindu youth. Thus, the beacon light to which the nation had been inured to look for guidance throughout the freedom struggle was suddenly extinguished within a few months of the attainment of independence!

In October 1947 Kashmir was invaded and lightning decisions had to be taken by India which had attained independence barely a few weeks before, involving commitment to a prolonged dispute which has dogged us throughout these years.

Seldom had the leadership of a new-born nation been called upon to face such a cataract of disasters. It speaks tremendously for the courage, wisdom and humanity of the national leadership that it weathered all these storms and unfalteringly upheld principles of sanity and justice between communities when so much lunacy was let loose.

Next came the incredible miracle of unification of the country achieved by Sardar Patel.

The 500 odd principalities and jurisdictions which the British had left behind with the transfer of power, were integrated into the single polity of India within a brief and breathless year or two. Without the firing of a shot, a third of the country, the exotic India of resplendent courts and bejewelled Maharajas lording over a squalid back-broken countryside, had been joined to the mainstream of Indian national life. India now enjoyed a greater measure of political unity than at any time since the days of Ashoka two thousand years ago!

Another momentous task that was carried out during the early years after the attainment of independence was the hammering out of a Constitution to embody the principles of governance for the 360 millions on the Indian sub-continent. This was a historic event from any point of view. There has been no parallel in history for a sub-continental community like the peoples of India, with all their variety and heterogeneity, calmly sitting down to evolve through their accredited representatives a democratic constitution for their future governance. Three general elections have been conducted under this Constitution on the basis of adult franchise and with 14 to 21 crores of people going to the ballot-box, by far the largest numbers ever assembled for such purpose in history.

On the midnight of 14/15th August 1947 the Indian nation had 'a tryst with Destiny' in the words of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. With the attainment of freedom the country had to grapple with a host of problems, accumulated over decades and indeed some of them over centuries. One of the most complex and delicate problems that the country had to face in the early years after the attainment of independence was the issue of the re-organisation of the constituent States of the Indian Union. The territorial boundaries of the former Provinces of the British Raj as they existed on the eve of independence were an irrational hotch-potch, the resulting outcome of a series of historical and administrative accidents over a period of 150 years. The pattern did not accord with the organic lineaments of the Indian community. The Indian National Congress had for several years advocated the re-alignment of the boundaries of the Provinces on the lines of homogeneous linguistic units. The issue could no longer be deferred. Eventually, after enormous canvassing of the alternatives in the Legislatures and outside, a broad consensus of opinion emerged along which the States were re-organised in 1956. Two outstanding issues still remained. One was the constitution of separate linguistic States for Maharashtra and Gujarat, which was put through in May 1960. The other was the division of the Punjab into the States of Haryana and Punjab, which was accomplished as late as the 1st November 1966. This vast and complex operation, which profoundly disturbed the pre-existing pattern of long standing—created administrative entities of new States, abolished some existing ones, altered the boundaries of most of them — naturally could not come about uneventfully. Acrid debates and wide chasms of opinion rent the Indian community in many places.

Considering the complexity and the enormity of the task, however, what is surprising is not that this issue caused so much rufflement as that *it did not cause much more*. Almost certainly, even in some of the long-established federal democracies in the world, such an undertaking involving so many federating units would have caused the profoundest convulsions. That in India, by and large, the problem was solved so

smoothly does credit to the resiliency of top Congress leadership, the public confidence in its impartiality and integrity and above all the fundamental unities binding the people of the Indian sub-continent and their patience and abiding mutual goodwill.

The constituent units of the Indian Union are now broadly along the lines of the organic regional unities of the sub-continent. The re-organisation of States has made each State much more homogeneous internally and removed from within many of the divergent pulls and discords which had plagued its harmony in the past. This is not to say that the problem of Indian unity and integration is now all solved. Indeed, with the greater homogeneity of the federating units, the need for stronger cementing forces to bind them together into the Indian Union has increased. Indian unity has always been multiplex rather than monolithic. The new set-up of the Union poses now the problem in its true perspective whereas in the fragmentations and cross-fragmentations of the Indian Provinces the issue itself was confounded and lost in a hopeless mess. Quite often the first step towards the solution of a problem is the posing of a right question relating to it.

We are apt to discount our mercies! It is indeed providential that some of these momentous issues were grappled in the first flush of the early years of the post-independence era under the eye of a superlatively outstanding national leadership.

The Indian Revolution for which the Congress Party worked under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi was never merely an effort to bring about transfer of power from the British to Indian hands. Under Gandhiji and later under Nehru the Congress increasingly represented the entire social, economic as well as political urges of the Indian people. Swaraj was recognised only as a pre-requisite for the profound social and economic transformation that the country needed. "Swaraj without removal of untouchability", Gandhiji remarked symbolically, "will have no meaning for me". He also observed on another occasion "It is my ambition to wipe every tear from every eye". The advent of independence on the 15th August

1947 was, therefore, not the end of the Congress saga but only the end of the beginning!

Today, 19 years after the advent of independence, how does the score-book of the Indian Revolution stand?

So far as the fashioning of the mechanism of political democracy is concerned, we can justly compliment ourselves on an excellent beginning. No doubt, many conventions and practices essential for the smooth functioning of political democracy in our special conditions are yet to be established. However, our record in the working of the forms of parliamentary democracy, contrasted with that of scores of other newly enfranchised Asian and African countries, stands luminous and promising.

We have alongside established the framework and nourished the principles of a genuinely free society — the rule of law; secularism; independence of the judiciary; freedom of expression; freedom of association. These are not achievements to be despised in a world where both modern and ancient forms of enslavement of the human spirit continue to flourish.

The political mechanism is, however, principally a means to an end. The fulfilment of the Indian Revolution will be judged finally in terms of its economic and social achievements. The measuring rod of history will be: how far have we advanced in exorcising the spectres of hunger, squalor, distress and unemployment which have haunted the Indian masses for countless generations?

A word about social reform. Much legal and formal emancipation has been registered. This is true in respect of women, children, Harijans, the landless, the tenants, the aboriginals — all the underprivileged of the Indian community. This is not to say that the full and true emancipation of these classes has been achieved. Caste and community, those ancient stratifications of Indian social life, still very much persist.

The economic problem is, however, the problem of problems in India today.

Over 15 years now, we have been engaged in national planning. The planning process has involved an overhaul and reconstruction of many sectors of our economic life. Industrial

production has increased not only in consumption goods but also in basic commodities and machine-making. In the agricultural sector there have been enacted far-reaching reforms in the ownership of land, the abolition of intermediaries, the reform of land tenures, protection of tenants and so on. Numerous programmes and measures for soil and water conservation, for provision of irrigation and drainage facilities, for the organisation of agricultural extension, have been adopted and carried out. A considerable development has also taken place in the infra-structure facilities of the economy, that is to say, in the generation and distribution of power; in communications and transportation; in shipping, harbours and port facilities. Along with these measures of planned development, there has been a lot of structural and institutional reform of Indian economy. Many new policies have been initiated and reforms accomplished in respect of banking and insurance; credit policies, fiscal and taxation policies; the expansion of co-operative movement; the regulation of industrial relations and so on.

Apart from these measures relating to the apparatus of production, our national Plans have embraced many activities outside the strictly economic field: the expansion of education; the provision of water supply, public health, housing and other civic amenities to towns and the countryside; the welfare of the handicapped and the disabled; the promotion of literature, fine arts and handicrafts; and countless others too numerous to be enlisted. All these have been embraced in the ambit of the gigantic undertakings of national reconstruction.

It must, however, be recognised that there now supervenes a widespread feeling of dissatisfaction and disenchantment in the country.

Certain untoward recent happenings have accentuated this depression. The Third Five Year Plan of the country was knocked askew by the sharp increase in defence outlays occasioned by the Chinese confrontation across the Himalayan border. The hostility of Pakistan continues undiminished and actually broke out into an act of aggression against India last year. The targets of the Third Plan were not reached over a certain range of commodities. The double compulsions of

defence and development imposed a severe strain on the economy during the Third Plan period resulting in a fairly steep rise in the price level and consequential hardships and suffering to the people. On the top of all this, the last year of the Third Plan period, 1965-66, was a year of acute famine and drought over large parts of the sub-continent, probably the worst season of the century so far. The current monsoon also has proved to be grossly deficient, piling on the top of the famine year, another year nearly as bad.

In the political field as well, these two years have been a period of grave challenge. In the last 30 months, India was convulsed twice with the calamity of the loss of its national leader, first Jawaharlal Nehru and then a year ago Lal Bahadur Shastri, just as he was growing into the mould of his heroic predecessor. The advent of the elections has naturally raised the political temperature and we have witnessed in the last few months in the Legislatures and outside, words and acts of violence, indiscipline and disorder unprecedented since we attained freedom.

Against such a backdrop it is comprehensible if defeatist and desperate counsels find credence. Strange as it may seem, there are people who argue as if we have done nothing right in the last 15 years. It behoves those who take an adult and mature view, not to be overwhelmed by the transitory setbacks and squalls, to preserve a proper perspective and sense of proportion in their judgments. Nobody will claim that we have been infallible or that our performance has not been deficient in some respects. However, it is totally egregious and alarmist to suggest that nothing has been achieved over the last fifteen years of planning. We will go into the *pros* and *cons* more thoroughly later. However, meanwhile, here are a few outstanding facts.

The net national income at *constant prices* has increased by about 70 per cent between 1950-51 and 1964-65, from a figure of Rs. 9850 crores to Rs. 16,630 crores. This is a compound rate of increase of 3.8 per cent. Admittedly, this rate is not

as high as we would have liked it to be. Let us, however, not forget that for several decades prior to 1950 the Indian economy had been growing at less than one per cent per annum.

During these fifteen years, population increased by 134 millions, that is to say, 2.5 per cent per annum. As a result, the *per capita* income increase was only 28 per cent or at an annual rate of 1.8 per cent.

In agriculture, in these fifteen years there was a compound growth rate of 3 per cent per annum. Against this, over the previous fifty years, agriculture had not expanded at more than perhaps half per cent per annum.

We are living in the midst of a famine year currently. Last year, the worst famine year of the century, necessitated our importing some 10 or 11 million tonnes of foodgrains. Substantial imports, though not of this order, are also expected to be required during the current year, as 1966-67 also has been a very lean year coming on the top of a previous famine year. Let these circumstances, however, not blind us to the fact that food production has been substantially increased over the last fifteen years in the country. In 1950-51 the total production of foodgrains was 55 million tonnes. In 1964-65, the year previous to the famine year 1965-66, the production had increased to 89 million tonnes. In fact, the *per capita production of foodgrains increased from 12.8 to 15.4 ounces per day from 1950-51 to 1964.*

It may well be asked as to why we were short of food even in a good year like 1964-65 and had to import some 5 to 6 million tonnes when the production of foodgrains had increased so much. The explanation lies in the fact that tens of millions of persons have gone hungry over years in India. They are eating more with greater availability of foodgrains. Even as of today, there are still many millions who do not have enough to eat in a normal year. In the forecast of requirements of food for India, one has to allow not merely for the increase in the requirements due to the increase in numbers but also for the larger consumption by those who have hithertofore gone hungry and who would want to eat more food as soon as they have an opportunity.

Here are a few indicators of growth: In 1950-51 the total electrical power generated was 203 million kwh. In 1965-66 it was 1730 million kwh. Incidentally, currently we are expanding our power-generating capacity in India *every year* by a quantum equal to the total generating capacity in existence when India attained independence in 1947! This would be some measure of the rate at which we are growing.

In 1950-51, 3700 towns and villages were electrified. Today, in 1965-66 the number is 52,000. The Fourth Five Year Plan proposes to take the number to 110,000.

We have been energising pumps for agricultural production in a big way over the last few years. The total number of pumps energised in 1960-61 was 1.6 lakhs. In 1964-65 the number became 4 lakhs. In 1965-66 the number is expected to have gone to 4.8 lakhs and in the next five years it is hoped to take the number to 11 or 12 lakhs.

Irrigated area has increased over the last fifteen years in the country by 47 million acres.

Industrial production has increased over this period by 160 per cent.

Here are a few facts relating to industrial production: The value of the total machinery production in the Indian economy in 1950-51 was Rs. 30 crores. The output increased to a value of Rs. 315 crores by 1965-66. This is expected to increase to a value of Rs. 1600 crores or so by the end of the Fourth Plan.

We produced till 1950-51 machine tools worth Rs. 30 lakhs. The value of our production of machine tools in 1965-66 has gone up to Rs. 23 crores. In the next five years the production is expected to be of the value of well over Rs. 100 crores.

It is true that some of the targets of the Third Plan were not achieved in time, notably fertilisers and steel. One of the important difficulties met with was the uncertainty and non-availability of foreign exchange for the necessary imports of machinery. However, a good deal of capacity has been built up in the course of the Third Plan period, of which the production will be realised in the early part of the Fourth Plan period. Many of the targets of the Third Plan not achieved by April 1966 will in fact be reached, in some cases in six

months and in some other cases within a year or so of the close of the Third Plan period.

It is equally absurd to suggest that whatever economic development has taken place until now has benefited only the rich.

It is obvious that the principal beneficiaries of the increased food production and food availability would be the poorer classes of persons. So far as the industrial production is concerned, the vast bulk of industrial production relates to goods of common consumption. Figures of industrial production are available on the lines of the usual classification between basic industries, intermediate goods industries, consumer goods industries and so on. These figures are not available in terms of the production of luxury goods or semi-luxuries. For one thing, the classification as to what is a 'luxury' or 'semi-luxury' is based on a subjective judgment rather than an objective criterion. Nevertheless, such data as are available on the subject show that the proportion accounted for by commodities which may conceivably be called luxury items or semi-luxury items or items of consumption for the rich, is very small in the total value of industrial output.

The latest information available of the value of total industrial production from factories covered under the Factories Act, is for the period 1962 based upon the survey carried out for that period. The total value of industrial output covered in the survey was Rs. 4,176 crores. In this overall output, the value of what may clearly be called luxury or semi-luxury items was the following:

Wines and alcohol breweries	Rs. 4 crores
Refrigerators and air-conditioners	Rs. 5 crores
Jewellery	Rs. 1 crore
Toilet preparations	Rs. 10 crores

The output of the following commodities may also be mentioned although they can hardly be called luxury or semi-luxury items:

Motor-cars	Rs. 25 crores
Motor-cycles	Rs. 15 crores
Cigarettes	Rs. 50 crores

Point is often made about the production of fine and superfine textiles as a part of our textile production. It is questionable for one thing, whether some of the fine and superfine textiles are not bought by persons of modest means. In any case, the proportion of fine and superfine cloth in total textile production runs at about $4\frac{1}{2}$ and about $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent only respectively.

It has also to be remembered that the so-called luxury and semi-luxury items carry very high excise duties. A policy whereby a small amount of luxury production is tolerated but at the same time the consumers of the commodity are made to contribute heavily to the public fisc has something to commend it.

The industrial output in industries catering to the non-essential items of production is held down under the licensing laws. Thus, during the Fourth Plan period, only small and marginal expansions are contemplated in the output of what may be regarded luxury or semi-luxury items as against the total industrial output which is expected to increase from about Rs. 5,800 crores in 1965-66 to over Rs. 12,000 crores in 1970-71.

That the large bulk of the increased production has been for the benefit not of the rich but of the poor and middle sections of society is positively indicated by consideration of the following facts as well:

	Production 1955	Production 1965
Scooters	528	202441
Razor blades (in millions)	174.6	931.3

There has been a tremendous growth in passenger traffic both by Railways and by road. The number of third-class passengers originating on the Indian Railways in 1950-51 was 12.42 million; in 1964-65 the figure was 19.22 millions. During the same period, the passenger traffic carried by buses by road increased in terms of 'million passenger kilometres' more than three-fold from 23,000 to 76,000.

The annual production of bicycles has increased 15-times during the last fifteen years. The production of sewing machines has increased 12-fold. The production of cement has quadrupled.

ed. The production of diesel engines has increased 17-fold. Foot-wear production has increased 3-fold. The consumption of sugar has trebled and that of vanaspati has increased 2½-times.

Most of these are articles of consumption whose demand by the rich in the community is not elastic. Obviously, the bicycles and sewing machines are finding their way into households of modest means. The increased consumption of sugar, vanaspati and foot-wear, for which exact figures especially from the small scale sector are however not available, have also obviously redounded to the benefit of the poor.

Besides, as a part of our planned strategy we have *deliberately controlled and moderated* the growth of consumption goods industries. Otherwise, the immediate benefits of increased industrial production would have been larger. For the rest, industrial growth has been oriented in the direction of building up of self-reliance in the economy.

It should be obvious from all this that the main beneficiaries of growth of production have been the general community. That this benefit has not yet percolated, in sufficient measure, down to the lowest levels of the economic strata, especially the landless labour in the countryside, is of course true. Hereafter, efforts must be specially bent towards achieving what Vinobaji calls 'Antyodaya' or the welfare of the poorest. This as well as the question of countering the concentration of economic power, especially in the field of industrial production, will be considered in its appropriate place.

II

SWADESHI AND SWARAJ

The drive towards self-reliance

Sixty years ago, the Indian National Congress gave the first clarion call for '*swadeshi*' in the national movement. Swadeshi was the spearhead of the national movement and the freedom struggle throughout thereafter. We have come a long way since. The country has taken many strides on the road to swadeshi and self-reliance in the eighteen years since independence and is now poised for the final breakthrough. With the attainment of self-reliance in modern industry, the country would have realised its long cherished dream. Swarajya is not fulfilled until there is swadeshi and '*swavalamban*'.

At the time of independence there had been some industrial development, principally in consumer industries like cotton and jute textiles, sugar mills, plantations and food processing industries. There was one major steel plant, no fertiliser plant, no engineering or chemical industry worth the name. All the machinery and equipment and most of the industrial raw materials except for those produced by the agricultural sector had to be imported.

Agriculture has always enjoyed the highest priority in Indian planning. It was, however, recognised quite early that capital enrichment of the Indian economy could not proceed very far within the bounds of an essentially agrarian base. This necessarily meant industrialisation. There was centuries of backlog and stagnation in the apparatus of production, which had to be overcome. Besides, a breakthrough in agriculture itself required provision of essential inputs like chemical fertilisers, pesticides, agricultural machinery, irrigation pumps and engines, electric power for lift. Thus, growth in agriculture and growth

in industry were not mutually competitive but mutually supporting and supplementary.

India is a large country with a very wide spectrum of endowments by way of natural resources for supporting an industrial base. Barring a few things like some non-ferrous metals, sulphur and phosphorus and a few others, we possess resources practically for everything else which a modern industrial community needs. With the large market provided by the continental community, the essential pre-requisites for a well-developed industrial structure are at hand.

In this context, the objectives of planned development in the industrial sector are broadly three. One is the objective of growth with a view to meeting increasingly the requirements of our growing population. The second objective is the development of self-reliance, that is to say, developing our own industrial potential in fields hithertofore undeveloped so that we may achieve economic independence in the true sense. The third objective is social justice, that is to say, to see that the fruits of industrial growth are widely shared, that industrial development secures widespread opportunities for employment and initiative and that economic power is decentralised and exercised in accordance with our concept of social good.

Our industrial growth in the last fifteen years of planning must be tested against these touchstones.

Industrial production in different fields has recorded a sizeable increase over the last fifteen years. Our total production in industries increased at constant prices from a figure of Rs. 330 crores to a figure of about Rs. 1,435 crores between 1950-51 and 1965-66, that is to say, there has been an almost 4-fold increase.

The much wider availability of electric power over the countryside has opened out new vistas in the pattern of industrial development. Hithertofore, industrial development in India has been confined to and over-concentrated in a few metropolitan centres and a handful of large towns. Enormous areas rich in natural resources and potential have remained backward in the

absence of the catalytic agency of industrial development. All such backward regions and the countryside generally have increasingly opened out to the nourishing ferment of industrial growth by the spread of electric power and communications. New growth centres have developed all over the country. Bhilai, Ranchi, Durgapur, Hardwar, Thana, Khopoli, Pimpri, Nasik, Bhopal, Coimbatore, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Kolhapur, Ludhiana, Rourkela, Kalyani, Baroda, Tiruchi, Viskhapatnam, Cochin, Gwalior, Kotah and so many others.

The production of a wide variety of industrial goods has increased remarkably over the last fifteen years. These increases have taken place not only in consumer goods like sugar, textiles, cement, bicycles, fans, sewing machines, radios, and hundreds of others. Industrial production has also increased in respect of intermediate goods as well as machinery and a number of key industries. We produce indigenously today a large range of machines and consumer durables that we used to import, e.g., diesel locomotives, wagons and coaches, diesel engines and electrical pumps; a wide range of drugs and pharmaceuticals; of rubber goods; of cellulose fibres and lots and lots of other things.

Except for 1965-66 during which there was a severe shortage of raw materials owing to foreign exchange difficulties, the industrial output has increased steadily at the rate of 7 to 8 per cent during the Third Plan period. Although some of the industrial targets were not reached, the growth in output in basic industries during this period has been appreciable as compared to the general index of industrial production. In key industrial sectors such as machineries, metals, chemicals, fertilisers, the rate of growth has been more than 15 per cent per year. Large investments have been made during this period in industries producing heavy electrical equipment, heavy foundry forge, engineering machinery, heavy plates and vessels, etc., all of which will become available in increasing quantities from now on.

While the production of a wide range of commodities has increased significantly over the last fifteen years, it is well known that there are shortages in respect of several of these

commodities as at present. The fact of the matter is that while production has increased, the demand has also increased and in some cases the demand has increased more than the production. In a developing economy this is inevitable as, with the growth in income, people's demand for different goods also increases.

The special feature of industrial development, especially from the commencement of the Second Plan, has been the *structural change* that has come over the economy as a result of pioneering development in a number of basic and key industries. The production of steel has increased from one million tonnes to 4½ million tonnes; of aluminium from 4,000 tonnes to 65,000 tonnes; of diesel engines from 5,000 to 85,000; of machine tools from a total value of Rs. 30 lakhs to a total value of Rs. 23 crores; of petroleum products from 2 lakh tonnes to 10 million tonnes; of cement from 27 lakh tonnes to 108 lakh tonnes. With the development of metallurgical, machine-making and basic industries, the industrial structure has developed the muscle and punch necessary for self-reliant growth. While a good deal still remains to be done for filling gaps in the structure, the industrial complex, as a whole, has now a much greater ability to press forward with growth and diversification on its own power.

When we started on this planning business, almost everything—from a needle to a steam-roller—used to be imported. Today, over a very large area of industrial production, we have achieved the capacity of producing the goods ourselves. If the quantities produced at the moment, say, for instance, in the case of scooters or motor-cars or cement or steel or aluminium, are short of the demand, it is only a matter of time and investment before we catch up. When we can afford in the budget of our national economy to invest more resources into these lines of production, we will be able to produce a sufficient quantity of these commodities. The important thing is that we produce these things ourselves and don't have to import.

Self-reliance is, therefore, of more abiding importance than

merely the recording of growth. Self-reliance entails that we should develop our capacity to produce our own machinery and equipment for putting up the necessary factories and establishments for producing the industrial goods that we need. For supporting machine-making capacity we need to develop a capable and broad-based metallurgical industry so as to produce the steel, aluminium, alloys and special steels and other metals on which machine-making capacity is based.

It was at the commencement of the Second Plan period, roughly about ten years ago, that we started seriously on this business of deepening the structure of industrial production. Three big steel plants in the public sector were started in the Second Plan period and are all now producing at their full-rated capacity for some years.

We have taken some big strides towards self-reliance in an important field in the development of refining capacity and oil exploration. We commenced this business less than ten years ago, and we are already producing now something like a third of our requirements of crude oil. It may be recalled in this connection that during British rule the expert advice was to the effect that the Indian sub-continent held out no hopes for oil prospecting. Thanks to the aid and encouragement of Russian technologists, this bleak position stands now wholly transformed. In regard to petroleum refineries, we have already attained a refining capacity adequate for 75 per cent of our requirements. With the new refineries projected, we should become 100 per cent self-sufficient in this field in the next three or four years. Petrol refining also opens out the vast possibilities in the field of petro-chemicals. We have a programme for exploration and exploitation of oil on hand on the basis of which it is confidently expected that we will attain the capability of meeting about half of our requirements, which are steadily growing in the meantime, by the end of the current Plan period.

We have built up a great deal of machine-building capacity in recent years. To cite but a few illustrations, we now make the bulk of sugar plant machinery, cement machinery, textile machinery and the full normal range of machine tools.

We already produce a good part of electrical power equipment both for generation and transmission. With the potentialities already built up and the further expansions planned for the Fourth Plan period, our power equipment capacity, that is to say, for producing turbines, boilers, transformers, switch-gears, etc., would have been developed by the end of the Fourth Plan so as to achieve full self-sufficiency. Thereafter, *practically all our requirements for additional power would be found indigenously*. Future power-stations, whether hydro or thermal, will be cent per cent 'swadeshi'.

Take transport: In wagons and coaches we are already self-sufficient and indeed have potentiality for export. We make diesel and electrical locomotives even today but the imported components need to be brought down in this production. We should reach 70-80 per cent self-sufficiency in this important field by the end of the Fourth Plan.

Our fertiliser production programme has been delayed in the past on account of our dependence on imports of foreign machineries. Over the next four years, with the industrial projects specially planned for the purpose, we would have put up the necessary machine-making facilities so as to produce the machinery for fertiliser factories ourselves from 1971 onwards.

A good part of our pesticides are imported today. We should be virtually self-sufficient in this field by 1971. In pharmaceuticals and drugs we have already made very considerable progress. By the end of the Fourth Plan we should be meeting the entire requirements of the country in almost all the basic drugs.

Machine tools are the bricks with which the structure of modern industry is built up. We made hardly any of them fifteen years ago. Today we meet half of our requirements of machine tools. In the next three or four years we would have reached a degree of self-reliance to the extent of about 75 or 80 per cent in volume and variety.

We now produce four times as much steel as we produced fifteen years ago. What is much more important, we have put up big engineering complexes which will enable us to produce

our own machinery for putting up new steel plants hereafter. When the Heavy Engineering Corporation at Ranchi in Bihar starts producing at its full-rated level of production, we would be making ourselves the greater part of the machinery requirements of new steel mills to be put up in the country.

Much still remains to be done no doubt by way of establishing proper linkage and filling gaps in our structure of mother industries. These gaps have been identified and the industrial projects for the Fourth Plan are designed to fill as many of them as possible.

A good deal of the machine-making capacity is in the private sector of industry. Indeed there is no question about private and public sectors in this context. Economic self-reliance appertains to the national economy as a whole.

Swarajya is incomplete and indeed insecure without '*swavalamban*'. While we have still some way to go and while there may have been some deficiencies in our performance, our broad strategy of industrial development has undoubtedly been on the right lines. We have been not merely trying to increase our production of industrial consumables but simultaneously developing our capacity to produce the machinery and equipment for all such future growth ourselves.

The efforts towards achievement of self-reliance in basic industrial items and capital goods have to be supplemented by a parallel progress towards developing indigenous design, engineering skills and know-how.

We have made a considerable progress by developing a number of design and consultancy organisations both in the public and private sectors. We have built up a considerable body of technological experience and skills in different fields of industrial enterprise including some of the vital fields like iron and steel, mining and fertilisers, machine-making and metallurgy. These design and consultancy organisations will have to be strengthened and their scope enlarged. The technical skills will have to be diversified and deepened. We shall have

to be prepared to take risks and engage Indian parties for designing our plants and equipment and for fabricating machineries even though they may be doing this for the first time. We have been too easy and over-ready to engage foreign collaborators, whether in consultancy, in technology or in equity participation. We will need to forbid sternly hereafter foreign collaboration, save and except where it is demonstrably indispensable.

The philosophy of industrialisation that we have adopted is not confined merely to the growth and development of what is called modern industry or the organised sector of industries. One of the principal objectives of the planning effort in India is the provision of employment. While the organised sector of modern industry can furnish the dynamism and the sinews of self-reliance, it can provide but a modest volume of employment opportunities.

We have all along envisaged, therefore, that there will be a modern sector of industry alongside of village industries, handicrafts and small industries and other elements in which more labour-intensive techniques will be deliberately adopted in order to provide employment. In short, we have envisaged the co-existence of the 'Boeing and the Bullock-cart' for their respective distinct purposes. Where modern industry requires automation for technological reasons or for reasons of efficiency in the international market, we would not hesitate to adopt such techniques. At the same time where the economic sacrifice involved is not considerable and is worth while in the national interest having regard to the larger employment that we will be able to provide thereby, we would deliberately adopt less advanced or intermediate techniques of production and foster small industries, khaddar, village crafts, etc.

So far as the rural population is concerned, apart from developing all manner of supporting and supplementary occupations for the agricultural population in the countryside, e.g., dairying, poultry-farming, fisheries, animal husbandry, etc., a large and decentralised sector of industrial growth should be developed

by way of agricultural processing activities, small industries, village industries and crafts.

From the locational point of view, we envisage that as much as possible of the industrial activity will be decentralised. In particular, huge industrial complexes like the metropolitan centres of Bombay, Calcutta, Ahmedabad, Kanpur, Delhi, etc., would not be allowed to grow. These industrial conurbations create extremely difficult civic problems within themselves besides entailing the degradation of lakhs of workers who have to go there in search of employment leaving their villages and giving up their home life. These centres become unhealthy cancerous growths on the body-politic. They become irresistible magnets for an undue proportion of the country's finances, enterprise and energies denuding and pauperising the countryside correspondingly.

Our economy has to be a mixed economy in more than one sense of the term. It has to be a mixed economy both in the public and private sectors. It has to be for a long time to come a mixed economy in the sense of permitting the co-existence of advanced, intermediate and even rudimentary technologies in the appropriate fields.

The rapid growth of the modern small industries sector is amongst the most notable features of our planned progress, particularly during the last decade. The steps that have been taken for invigorating this sector through wide measures of assistance programmes have yielded results and a large number of young men, many of them technicians, drawn mostly from the middle level of the society, have started small industries all over the country. The State Industries Directorates, which register on optional basis, have on their registers nearly one lakh small industrial enterprises. Several of them produce a variety of sophisticated items requiring high degree of technical skill both in engineering and chemical lines.

The village industries had steadily languished for decades under British rule and in many cases had been utterly broken up and extirpated, adding millions of artisans and craftsmen to the landless labour force. They are now being steadily revived through a variety of programmes of planned assistance. This

is one of the most difficult and complex undertakings in the strategy of industrial development in India and while the progress so far recorded has not been spectacular, there has definitely been a trend towards significant betterment. In many village industries and crafts, this has brought, for the first time, the promise of hope and cheer to millions engaged in these non-agricultural pursuits in the countryside. To quote but one instance: The production of handloom, powerloom and khadi was about 900 million metres in 1951; it increased to about 3150 million metres in 1965-66.

In a developing economy which suffers from an acute shortage of investment resource such as ours, there is an inevitable basic dilemma to face. Since the resources are not sufficient for all lines of desirable production, there are bound to be shortages of commodities. The internal market has nevertheless to be sheltered from the international competition for developing indigenous capacity. There comes into being, therefore, largely non-competitive sellers' market for industrial goods. Cost and productivity consciousness tend to be discounted in practice in such an environment.

In this transitional stage, the maintenance of controls to the extent necessary for protecting the consumer especially in respect of articles essential for the common man's daily existence is unavoidable. While controls have to be both selectively applied and effectively enforced, wherever practicable, in particular areas of the economy where the disciplines of the competitive system can be restored, it is necessary to release such areas from controls and allow competition to work towards quality and cost-reduction. Over the areas of economy where free competition cannot operate, concurrently with controls, ceaseless pressures have to be built up for improving productivity and cost-consciousness.



FOOD, FARMING, FOREIGN AID

Food and Farming

The main elements of the food problem in India are easily stated. In fact, the outlines of a solution also have been known for a long time and there is nothing original to be added. It has mainly been due to indifferent implementation of policies that our difficulties have been compounded.

Basically, the problem of food shortage has arisen because supply has lagged behind demand although we have seen that the supply has considerably increased. A number of forces like growth of population, urbanisation, rise in incomes, have resulted in increasing the demand for foodgrains and these forces will continue to operate.

It is evident enough that over the next five years and possibly longer, food availability will continue to cause concern and the control and regulation of the food economy is inescapable.

It will be some years before the progress in irrigation removes the uncertainty in agriculture arising out of the vagaries of the annual monsoon. There will also, therefore, be bad years during which marginal shortages will suddenly become acute and grave. We cannot, therefore, consider ourselves safe on the food front unless sizeable buffer stocks are built up.

The two aims of national food policy naturally are equitable distribution and maintaining the prices at reasonable levels. In view of the fact that some States are surplus and some are deficit, there has to be a 'national food budget'. This implies the unreserved acceptance of the principle of equal sharing on a national basis.

In view of the continuing food shortage, a system of public distribution has to be maintained to meet at least a part of the

consumer demand - principally of the poorer classes — at reasonable prices. A system of public distribution can function only if the Government acquires necessary supplies for maintaining it.

In order to provide adequate incentive for the production of foodgrains, guaranteed minimum support prices have to be fixed for the principal foodgrains and announced in advance. The guaranteed prices should be operative over a sufficiently long period, say, at least three years or so.

Self-reliance in food is not merely a question of economic improvement in the sense of eliminating dependence on food imports and possible outlays of foreign exchange for the purpose. *It is literally no less than a matter of national survival.* In a very bad year, such as 1965-66, we have seen that our need for imports may be as large as 10 or 11 million tonnes of foodgrains. It seems to be highly unlikely that anything like such large quantities of foodgrains would be available for export by way of surpluses in the rest of the world, should our food deficit continue at the present level and should such a need arise again.

It is not necessary for us to consider here a number of matters of detail, important as they are, which arise in connection with the adoption of an adequate national food policy. These are questions relating to procurement of food, State trading in foodgrains, restrictions on the movement of foodgrains within and between zones, adequate facilities for storage, arrangements for purchase of foodgrains by governmental agencies like the Food Corporation of India, rationing in large cities and so on. All these issues can be easily sorted out if a national food policy is adopted, a national food budget periodically prepared and *the writ of the Centre is made to run in the States.* Once this is established, the rest of it is merely a question of administrative mechanics and follow-up.

So far as the question of production of foodgrains is concerned, — and indeed this is equally true of the larger problem of the entire agricultural production — the strategy for the accom-

plishment of an adequate increase in the production of food-grains is clear enough. There is very limited scope available in the country now for the extension of the cultivated area. Most of the increase in production has, therefore, to come from out of a more intensive effort for production from the same area.

Increased agricultural production is vitally dependent on the supply of adequate inputs. These inputs are good seeds, irrigation, fertilisers, pesticides, improved implements, mechanical aids like tractors to the requisite extent, and so on. Credit facilities both for seasonal requirements and those of medium and long-term for improving the technique of production have also to be made available in adequate quantity. Apart from the physical inputs, there has to be a widespread network of agricultural extension services to train and orient farmers to the use of more intensive methods of cultivation with the aid of these inputs. Then, there are problems of marketing and storage and processing of the agricultural produce.

Our agricultural production has to be viewed in the context of a small farm economy in which tens of millions of farmers have to be assisted and enabled to increase their levels of productivity. This entails an enormous amount of organisation. A vast number of detailed and specific tasks embracing all the aspects enumerated above have to be undertaken over the entire countryside of rural India to make a significant impression on agricultural productivity. Indeed, given the inputs, *the accomplishment of the related increase in agricultural production is today the acid test of the administrative system in India.*

The application of agricultural inputs is vital and indispensable for a growth in agricultural production. But the physical inputs will not by themselves bring about the radical transformation we seek. These will have to be supported by important structural and institutional changes. The 'land reforms' — namely, protection of tenants, 'land to the tiller', ceilings on agricultural holdings — have, it is notorious, not been implemented in many States with the vigour and determination which they merited.

Even in credit, it is principally the provision of short-term credit that has made substantial progress. The progress has, besides, been unequal and while it has been satisfactory enough in three or four States, in several others, co-operation has remained relatively undeveloped. Even in this first stage unfolding of the co-operative principle, 'the crop loan' system, which is so obviously an urgently needed improvement in the rural credit arrangements, has yet to become a working hypothesis in many States.

No doubt short-term credit is of value in enabling the farmer to provide the current inputs like seed, fertiliser, pesticides, etc. Agricultural productivity can, however, significantly increase only by *improvement in the technique of production* and the physical environs and capabilities of the farm. Bunding and terracing, levelling, provision of water supply, whether through an irrigation well and pump or other available resource, eradication of weeds, improved implements, live-stock, and such other betterments require the provision of medium-term or long-term credit. Mechanical cultivation would require the organisation of service co-operatives for groups of farms with a provision of medium-term credit for the purchase of the equipment. Activities supplementary to farming, such as dairying, poultry-farming, rearing of pigs require the provision of medium-term credit.

In three or four States, land mortgage banks have made a remarkable headway in the direction of providing long-term credit to farmers in the last three or four years. However, in the total, the quantities of additional credit so provided are still very small. *Agricultural productivity cannot be improved significantly unless it is supported by massive doses of long-term and medium-term credits.* The channelling of the long-term savings in the economy through the land-mortgage banks into lasting agricultural development is, for obvious reasons, one of the most urgent and important objectives of our planning effort. An adequate programme must be drawn up to this end comprising, among others, a vigorous and sustained effort by the co-operative movement to mop up the rural savings with matching support from the Life Insurance Corporation and other financial agencies.

Foreign Aid

The place of 'foreign aid' in the scheme of national reconstruction needs to be identified.

Obviously there can be no question of our accepting foreign investment from any quarter with political strings attached to it.

Sometimes, however, the attitudes displayed towards foreign investment are passionate and irrational. Foreign investment is regarded as undistinguished from foreign economic ascendancy and inseparable from political entanglements. This view is unduly coloured and suspecting. It is refracted by the psychological fixations and complexes of a colonial history. We in India ought to frame towards foreign capital a mature, adult and confident attitude. When indigenous capital is so notoriously exiguous and when the creation of employment is such a crying need of the economy, it would be a meaningless masochism to inhibit even the small trickle of foreign investment that we are able to attract.

The countries that are in the vanguard of the present-day industrial civilisation have attained their current status directly as a result of large amounts of capital imports from outside in the earlier years of development. In America, for instance, during the latter decades of the 19th century, the economy was galvanised by the massive investments from Europe. The economic take-off in Japan, Germany, Canada, Italy, have all been actively aided in the halcyon days before the World Wars by the large imports of foreign capital. In the post-war world of economic autarchies, since the export of capital is now isolated, at any rate, from overt political control, this catalysing effect of capital export has greatly diminished. It has, therefore, become necessary to summon economic aid on a 'Government to Government' basis as a supplement to private capital investment.

The total foreign investment in private industry in India amounted to about 735 crores of rupees by December 31, 1962, the date of the last Reserve Bank survey. This is estimated to have increased to about Rs. 830 crores by now. The flow of

foreign investment to India is but a trickle and is by no means anything to cause legitimate alarm.

As regards 'foreign aid', it must be remembered, first of all, that the so-called foreign aid is overwhelmingly in the form of foreign *credits*. We have to pay interest on these credits and also to repay them in most cases.

During the first 6 or 7 years of our development, we could draw upon the large sterling balance accumulated during the war. Once these were drawn down, we came up short against 'balance of trade' difficulties. Broadly, the present position is that our exports are just about sufficient to meet 'the maintenance requirements' of the economy; that is to say, industrial raw materials, intermediates, components and spares, chemicals like sulphur, non-ferrous metals, etc., needed to keep the economy going. Besides these, we need to import machineries and equipment of the order of Rs. 450 to Rs. 500 crores per year for building up further the industrial infra-structure. Each year we are becoming more self-reliant in this respect as well; but in the meantime, we have to import these equipments. This requirement represents the gap of Rs. 450 to Rs. 500 crores in our 'balance of payments' position between the current level of our exports and our imports. This gap is eked out with the foreign credits of this order, which have been coming in.

The servicing of the foreign loan calls for an increase in our export potential. If the new industries that we set up year by year could develop an export potential adequate to service the loans as we go along, there would be no difficulty. However, in the fierce competition of the international market, it takes time and much effort before we can develop the export potential for the servicing of our foreign loan liabilities. During the interim, the economy has developed an alarming measure of dependence on the continued flow of foreign assistance. Any squeeze on this results at once in unused capacities and causes fall in economic production and distress. It is essential to get out of this state of dependence as quickly as possible.

There was a lot of public debate recently, when the rupee was devalued, as to whether the devaluation had been done under outside pressure. It is well-known that the World Bank

had long held the opinion that devaluation would do good to the Indian economy. It is also common knowledge that the World Bank, apart from the credits that it grants itself, plays an important role in influencing the flow of foreign credits to this country through the consortium of creditor countries which it has been helping to organise for some years now. Since the Indian economy was not in a position to cope with any substantial hold-ups in the flow of foreign credits, the opinion of the World Bank, in whatever form it was tendered, could not be ignored. The real point, therefore, is to redeem the economy from this state of dependence as quickly as possible.

There is no single dramatic solution to the problem. There is no sensational nostrum or cure that could just conjure away the trade deficit unless we are prepared to slow down our capital imports, which, of course, we must not do as that would only postpone the day of our self-reliance. The recapture of our freedom and initiative requires steady and unremitting action on a large number of issues on many fronts on the basis of more disciplined and discriminating policies. The solution cannot be procured by heroic flourishes or merely by raising patriotic slogans.

There are several areas in which a greater measure of national discipline will help bring the trade gap under control, increase the staying power of the Indian economy and advance the day of self-reliance. A positive and purposeful industrial licensing policy is, for instance, an essential prerequisite. A re-orientation of outlook as regards foreign collaboration and consultancy is another. Foreign collaborations involve not merely royalty payments but frequently wholesale imports of equipment and machineries, even when well-defined and sliceable portions of them can be made in the country. A steady import substitution drive, the promotion of exports by every possible means, well-articulated manufacturing programmes for replacement of imported industrial raw materials and intermediates, would be other essential ingredients in such national discipline. While the foreign exchange problem is complex and difficult, considerable easements can be procured and the position brought firmly under control within a few years by the

adoption of these policies. Here again, as on so many other issues of national policy, the essential prerequisite is strength, capacity and purposefulness in national leadership.

Today we are in the transitional stage of industrial development. The problems are relatively easy both when a country is completely undeveloped and when a country is fully developed. When a country is fully developed, the setting up of new industrial units presents no problems. You order the necessary equipment and facilities, assemble them on the site and there goes the factory! On the other hand, when a country is completely undeveloped, there is no alternative but to order out the complete plant from abroad on a turn-key basis. The real difficulties are met with in the transitional stage such as we are in; when you could make some of the components but not the entire machine; some of the machines but not all those needed for the plant; do not possess all the necessary process know-how; or have not yet built up consulting, designing or engineering capability in some item or other necessary in the putting up of complex plants like a fertiliser factory or a steel mill. It is in this situation that a high degree of determination and discipline is necessary to organise a breakthrough to full technological self-reliance. This requires a spirit of enterprise and daring combined with a full rapport between the policy-making, organisational and technical levels.

There is a rubric inscribed on the entrance of the Delhi Secretariat in the days of the British Raj: 'Freedom is not bestowed from above on any people. It has to be won'. This is even more true of economic freedom. It is not going to be found in the aid packages of either the countries of the East or the West. We will have to win it by our labour, our skill, our firm resolve, our patient organisation.

The Social Intra-Structure

We may notice very briefly some of the improvements recorded in the important fields of education, public health and medical relief. If I do not devote more space to these matters, it is not because I am insensible of the profound significance of the part

played by the social services in the development of the most important of all resources, namely, human resources. The entire purpose of economic activity is to make wealth cheap and man dear. It is only because these programmes are so straightforward and incontrovertible that they are treated with a short notice.

The number of students in schools was 23.5 million in 1950-51. It has nearly trebled to 67.7 million in 1965-66. This represents a 78 per cent of the relevant age-group. By the end of the Fourth Five Year Plan, it is envisaged that the percentage of the school-going age-group enrolled would rise to 92 per cent.

Apart from this quantitative improvement, there has been a qualitative improvement as well. The enrolments of girls and of children from backward communities have shown remarkable increases. At the post-Matric level, we have been concentrating more on engineering and technology courses than on arts and professional courses.

In the field of public health also, there have been substantial improvements. The number of hospital beds has practically doubled over the period. The number of practising nurses has trebled. Malaria, at one time a wide and persistent scourge, has practically been eradicated during this interval. The average expectation of life has increased from 32 years to 50 years.

Large numbers of specific programmes have been taken up and carried out for the welfare of the aboriginal population and the scheduled communities.

All this, however, merely touches a fringe of the problem of social transformation so far. A great deal more will have to be done in the years to come to widen the opportunities for educational advancement to the children of poor parents; to expand and diversify scientific and technical education; to improve the quality of teaching and the enrolment and social status of teachers; to organise an adequate library service especially for the new literates; to expand medical facilities; to provide water supply and public sanitation in our towns and the country. Family planning is another area of vital national concern. Housing in cities and the country is another crying need.

IV

THE PLAN

Planning in India is not merely a question of economic growth. The Plan is the blueprint of total national reconstruction. On the attainment of independence, the people of India came face to face with their Destiny. The tasks of national reconstruction facing free India amount to nothing short of a complete overhaul of an ancient, involved, stagnant, stratified society into a progressive modern industrial community with the contours of its life adapted to the urges and requirements of the mid-twentieth century. This entails the accomplishment of multiple revolutions in the life of the Indian community.

First, there is the revolution in the mechanics of governance. That is to say, the transition from a colonial administration to the apparatus of a welfare State with a framework of democratic set-up from the national Parliament through the State Legislatures down to Zilla Parishads and Village Panchayats.

The second revolution is the transformation of a semi-subsistence economy into a modern industrial community informed by urges of social justice.

There has also to be a social revolution embracing the emancipation and uplift of tens of millions of under-privileged and suppressed members of the Indian community who have to be granted, for the first time in history, equal rights of citizenship, equal opportunities to develop their personality.

Lastly, and underlying all this, there has to be a technological and scientific revolution comprehending not merely the apparatus of production and the material furnishings of social existence but also mental attitudes.

All these transformations are concurrently under way. They are governed by their respective laws of growth and dynamics.

They act and interact on each other incessantly. In other countries of the world, history afforded them the leisurely opportunity of enacting corresponding transformations not only over longer periods but also separately and one by one. In India, however, all these multiple processes have to be under way simultaneously and cannot be slow-motioned through decades and centuries as elsewhere. All this adds up to the staggering reality of some of the most stupendous and complex problems that have ever faced any generation in any country.

Our Five Year Plans are the current blueprints of our attack on these problems of national reconstruction.

We have so far accomplished three national Five Year Plans. This is not to say that there have not been mistakes or shortcomings, both of planning and performance. They have been aplenty. We live and learn. I have indicated at several places in this book and elsewhere the inadequacy of our Plan performance and the manner in which, I think, this should be remedied for the future. It is obvious, however, that the only way we can hope to wage a successful war on our national problems of poverty, squalor and want is by the strategy of national planning. Planning is basically no more and no less than national house-keeping over an adequate time-span for obtaining the desired results. The only remedy for inadequacies of past planning performance is better performance in the future.

Currently, we have in progress a national discussion on the Draft Outline of the Fourth Five Year Plan presented by the Planning Commission to the country.

A good deal of this debate centres round the question of the size of the Plan. There are people who argue that the Plan is too large and would like it to be drastically cut. On the other hand, there are others who assert that the Plan is too small and that even if it is fully carried out, poverty and want will still not be abolished or even drastically mitigated. One school of thought argues that the planning effort is unrealistic and over-ambitious; there are others who argue that the planning effort is timorous and halting.

Both these are subjective judgments. The size of the Plan has to be determined in relation to an *objective* assessment of the sources available for financing. Of course, our needs in practically all fields are very great. We need more industrialisation, more irrigation, better transport and communication facilities, more and better educational facilities, expansion and improvement of health services and hundreds of other needs. Planning cannot ride merely on wishes as horses! It has to be firmly geared to a realistic assessment of the resources likely to be available and the total outlay so determined has to be apportioned as best as possible amongst the various programmes for meeting the different national needs.

The Planning Commission's argument is that this is precisely how the Plan has been drawn up. The draft Plan proposes a total outlay of Rs. 23,750 crores at June 1966 prices. This represents a substantial reduction in the physical programmes originally envisaged by the Planning Commission for the Fourth Five Year Plan corresponding to the lower estimates of resources they are now compelled to make. An assessment of resources for the Plan is made on the basis of close estimates of revenue and capital receipts of the Central and State Governments over the Plan period and the likely outgo for non-plan expenditures, that is to say, the normal current expenditure of the Governments including defence.

Obviously, inasmuch as all these calculations are based on the estimates extending over a period of as long as five years, there is bound to be an element of forecasting errors in these calculations. This is, however, unavoidable. It is absurd and wholly untrue to suggest that apart from such avoidable element of uncertainty, these estimates are in any way deliberately doctored or concocted for producing any particular desired result.

Apart from the uncertainty about estimation, inevitable in any such exercise anywhere, there are two important elements of uncertainty in Indian conditions. One is the fact that the economic fortunes of the country fluctuate so materially in any particular year with the state of the monsoon in that year. Not only is agricultural production liable to fluctuate within a wide margin but, since agriculture produces raw materials for

other industrial activities, the fortunes in agriculture are reflected and multiplied in other sectors as well.

The second important element of uncertainty is relating to foreign aid. Although we are fast developing self-reliance, for the Fourth Plan period anyhow, we need to have imports for our machinery requirements for the further building up of our industrial structure and for deepening and strengthening the drive to self-reliance itself. This entails our obtaining aid from foreign countries. This aid comes in the shape of foreign credits, extended either by foreign governments or equipment suppliers or by international institutions like the World Bank, the International Development Association, etc. These credits come to us from a score of different countries, drawn from both the democracies of the West including Japan and the communist countries of the East. The aid has to be negotiated year by year because it is voted by the respective governments annually. Obviously, it is not possible for anybody to predict accurately what would be the total amount of foreign aid available to India during the Fourth Plan period from all these sources. Nevertheless, some estimates have to be made as without such estimates no specific programmes can be drawn up for our planning.

These elements of uncertainty are inescapable. The only way to provide against them is to arrange for regular periodical review of the Plan sights as well as the actual experience and take measures for readjustment. The emphasis in the draft Fourth Plan on review at the time of fixation of each Annual Plan at the Centre and with the States has been placed in the light precisely of these considerations.

The critics who attack the Plan size as being too large, seldom indicate where exactly their assessment of the resources differs from that given in the draft of the Plan. Unfortunately, some of the criticism that the Plan is too large also emanates from interested motivations. Some of the business interests wish to contest any proposals about additional taxation effort and even seek reduction in the present levels of taxation and argue for a

smaller plan from these motives. A further object perhaps in the background of such criticism is the hope that a reduction in the size of the Plan would mean a reduction in the public sector outlay and, therefore, lesser participation by government in industrial enterprise, leaving the field open, to a greater extent, to the private sector.

Those who criticise the Plan on the ground that it is too small, advance the reasoning as under: Certain long-term perspective of development had been envisaged for the 15-year period ending 1975-76 as the background in the preparation of the Third Plan. It was hoped that it would be possible to increase the national income at 1960-61 prices to Rs. 33,000 crores or so by 1975-76. It was hoped that the *per capita* income would be practically doubled in this fashion by 1977-78 as compared to the income in 1950-51. Those who would like to have a still larger planning effort point out that, owing to the difficulties met with during the Third Plan and since then, this objective would now recede and get somewhat postponed.

The size of the Plan, I repeat, has to be determined by a realistic assessment of our resources. Our needs are, of course, very much larger. A view has necessarily got to be taken regarding the possibilities of additional resource mobilisation by various measures of economy, further taxation, internal austerities and discipline. Having done this, it would be futile and dangerous to fix a Plan outlay larger than justified by the size of the resources. We are already experiencing the consequences of the deficit financing into which the exceptional contingencies of the Third Plan period, such as the Chinese and Pakistani aggressions and bad seasons, forced us. It would be highly improvident and dangerous to propose a plan outlay in excess of a realistic assessment of our resources and open out further possibilities of deficit financing and inflationary pressures.

The point is sometimes made that we are not according the necessary high priority to agricultural production in our Plan allocations. This is a misconceived criticism. Agricultural production programmes, which lie principally in the States'

sphere, have been provided in the draft Fourth Plan practically to the full extent to which the States have capacity for carrying them out. Apart from the Plan allocation of Rs. 2,475 crores for agricultural production programmes, there is an allocation of nearly a thousand crores for irrigation. Substantial portions of the industrial outlay relate to the production of fertilisers, pesticides and other agricultural inputs. A large provision is made for rural electrification and for the provision of electrical power for agricultural pumping sets. Altogether, counting in these indirect provisions for the agricultural sector, the total outlays in the Fourth Plan for agricultural production would amount to over Rs. 5,000 crores.

Practically, the entire industrial outlay in the public sector in the Fourth Plan is designed towards import substitution and foreign exchange savings. The outlays on transport, communications, power and other elements of the infra-structure are derived from the size of the outlays on industry and agriculture. The social services account for the rest.

One of the charges made is the odd complaint that the Plan assumes an improved level of performance. Indeed it does. It is common ground that to a substantial extent the Plan objectives have not been fulfilled because of various failures in the field of implementation. It is also known how these failures may be avoided. Surely when the greatest possible mobilisation of our resources continues to be necessary for progressing the drive against our age-old enemies, namely, poverty, want and distress, it is not suggested that we should assume a continuation of these deficiencies in performance. The deficiencies that are remediable *must* be remedied and it is right and proper that our calculations should be based upon the assumption that they will be so remedied. It would be wrong indeed to do otherwise.

One of the points of anxious concern to the ordinary citizen in regard to planning is its link with rise in prices. In the light of his harrowing experience during the last three or four years

on account of the very sharp rises in prices including food and essential commodities, the ordinary citizen is apt to ask fearfully whether planning must necessarily mean similar further increases in the prices hereafter.

The price rise during the first ten or eleven years of planning was quite modest and in fact, during the First Plan period the prices slightly fell. The sharp price rises have occurred during the Third Plan period. The anatomy of these price rises is very briefly stated. When China committed aggression against India along the Himalayan border in September/October 1962, the resulting situation profoundly affected, among other things, the Indian economy as well. With the menace of China overhanging like a sinister cloud on the long Himalayan frontier, the defence strategy and preparations of the country called for a radical overhaul and strengthening. In the years thereafter, the defence outlay has sharply increased by 400 to 500 crores. The Third Plan resources had been estimated after reckoning in all that we could mobilise on the basis of the pre-existing levels of normal expenditure of Government. The sharp increase in defence expenditure, therefore, made a substantial inroad into the resources available for the financing of the Plan. A valiant effort was made by the then Finance Minister of the Government of India to raise additional resources by fresh taxation. Notwithstanding this, there remained a very big gap which eventually came to be spanned by the very substantial deficit financing of Rs. 1,200 crores over the Third Plan period. The inflationary pressures generated by this, intensified by the food shortages consequential to bad seasons, have led to this sharp rise in prices. Price rise is a spiral. When prices rise, the dearness allowances have to be raised. This in turn means more purchasing power and, therefore, a further rise in prices.

It is my personal view that the right thing to have been done after the winter of 1962 would have been to cut down on Plan outlays to an extent more or less sufficient to meet the increased outlay on defence forced on the country by the new threat. Instead of this, the cry was raised of 'defence and development'. Of course, defence and development are mutually supplementary in the sense that modern defence requires

an adequate infra-structure of industry to support it. In the short term, however, when the resources are limited, this supplementality cannot help if the total outlay on defence and development exceeds the available resources. The result is bound to be inflationary.

In the draft of the Fourth Five Year Plan, the Planning Commission has repeatedly and earnestly exhorted the authorities to avoid deficit financing totally. If this is done and if our development is backed up by genuine mobilisation of the necessary quantum of resources, there is no reason why planning *per se* should lead to inflation or a rise in prices.

One may also make a distinction between rise in prices of the essential articles of consumption commonly used by the community and other commodities. So far as other commodities are concerned, there would of course not be the same urgency to intervene and prevent increases in their prices. In respect of consumption goods essential to the life of the community, this is imperative and shall have to form a part of the government policy. More than anything else, it is the production of food that is the critical factor in this regard. In the Indian economy, a large proportion of the total expenditure is on the consumption of food. If our agricultural programmes succeed and food production increases as planned, the maintenance of the price level of essential consumption articles will present little difficulty.

There is a lot of competition amongst the States for securing the location of public sector undertakings from the Central industrial plan. While one wholly sympathises with the natural ambition of each State to secure a wider share of the developmental process, the limitations which govern this field as well as the genuine operative factors are not sufficiently comprehended. For one thing the Central allocation to industries is principally to units integrally related to the strengthening of the industrial infra-structure. Steel, oil, fertilisers, coking coal, metallurgical industries, machine-making, heavy chemicals and such other basic industries are largely resource-based. The

'foot-loose' projects which could be optionally located in any one of several possible locations are only a handful. These locations certainly ought to be decided with an eye on the developing of the most undeveloped regions.

But the truth of the matter is most of India is undeveloped. Barring the metropolitan complexes, even the so-called developed States are really just as undeveloped as the rest. Unemployment and under-employment oppresses the economy of practically all the mofussil districts of the country. Besides, it is important to remember that industrial dynamism is far more efficaciously secured by certain measures within the volition of the State authorities themselves than by cajoling or bludgeoning the Centre to locate this or that public enterprise in a particular State. Good administration, security, infra-structure facilities in well-located industrial estates, a rational power-rate policy, procedural despatch in government offices, a modicum of critical help by the State Industrial Development Corporation are a far more efficacious catalyst collectively for industrial growth than the location of prestige projects including even a steel mill!

Above all, let there be no mistake, there are no soft options in Indian planning. We have present in India all the difficulties without the redeeming features which some others among the developing countries enjoy severally. Thus, the South American and African nations do not have to cope with the problem of pressure of population like the ancient lands of South-East Asia. The South-East Asian countries have generally a luxuriant, superabundant agriculture based on a dependable rainfall and generally have no problem of food shortage. The countries of the Middle-East are blessed by the bounty of astounding resources in oil which virtually insulate them against balance of payment worries inevitably besetting the developing countries. In India we have a 'lowest common multiple' of all difficulties of development. That is why Indian national reconstruction is such a great challenge.

The pace of Indian economic growth in the final analysis

depends on the rate of savings in our economy. This has hovered around 10% of the gross national product for some years now. Under the system of plural economy we have adopted, apart from taxation and fiscal measures to augment national savings, there has to be a widespread, unremitting effort to mobilise tiny bits of savings throughout the community — by small savings drives, through life insurance, through co-operative housing and in multifarious other ways. The adequate organisation of such an effort is a challenge to our imagination, drive and organising abilities.

More than the size of the Plan and the sectoral allocations, it is the implementation of the Plan programmes in practice and the institutional arrangements for carrying out the Plan objectives that are going to determine the quality of our Plan effort. We deal with this aspect of performance elsewhere.

It has to be remembered that the problems that we are facing are century-old problems of poverty, squalor and want. There is no magic wand with which they can be wafted out of existence overnight. The re-structuring of a continental community of the size and variety of India calls for a skilled, patient and ceaseless address over a spell of time. In this march of progress, the Fourth Plan, with whatever adjustments it may emerge finally, will represent a significant landmark.

MANY PROMISES TO KEEP

When Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru died, the following beautiful lines from Robert Frost were found by his bedside copied in his own hand:

The woods are lovely, dark and deep
 But I have promises to keep
 And miles to go before I sleep
 And miles to go before I sleep.

The Indian Revolution which swept the country to freedom in 1947, has pledged itself to certain principles for redeeming the lot of India's teeming millions. In broad terms, the main ideals actuating these principles are Democracy, Unity, Socialism, Peace. These ideals have to be forged into programmes of action and translated into terms of specific betterment in the daily lives of the Indian people. We consider in this chapter some of the important tasks which would go to fulfil these ideals and accomplish these programmes.

Good Government

We will consider the political implications of Democracy in a later chapter. One of the indispensable prerequisites for the survival of Democracy in contemporary Indian conditions is 'good government'. We consider this subject briefly in what follows:

Good government has an importance, all its own, in present conditions.

For many of India's current problems, the short evident reply is 'good government'. The fact is that there is substantial agreement with reference to many problems in India as regards

what *needs* to be done. Most of the political argument is regarding how well or badly it is *being done* in fact. That is why so many of our issues, on close scrutiny, resolve themselves into nothing but simple straightforward problems of good government. To name but a few: The problem of harnessing India's immense unexplored natural resources; the problem of increasing agricultural production; the staggering problem of providing employment; the problem of organising family planning over the length and breadth of the country and through the wide spectrum of its cultural strata; the problem of replacing foreign products, machinery and technology with Indian products, machinery and technology so as to achieve industrial self-reliance. There is basic agreement regarding what needs to be done about all these. The problem is the *actual doing* of it.

The Indian Administration today has immensely vaster responsibilities than the colonial bureaucracy of the Indian Dominion of 1947. The problems have not only grown in size and complexity. The Administration is now called upon to face a variety of new tasks, especially in the field of economic direction and industrial management, to which it was not previously accustomed.

Scores of ex-colonial countries have attained independence in the last twenty years. In most of them, democratic rule, the rule of law and institutions for free society have been in more or less degree subverted. India is an outstanding exception. An important factor which has contributed to this signal consummation is the godlike patience, the mutual goodwill and the peaceable disposition of the Indian people at large. Another factor — and an indispensable means — for the achievement of this happy outcome has undoubtedly been the well-found and well-manned administrative apparatus which free India inherited.

There is another sense in which good government has a crucial significance to India today. The Congress Party took over the reins of office in free India twenty years ago wearing the mantle of a revolutionary party. The masses of India naturally expect now, that the principles and promises of the Indian

Revolution should be enacted into their everyday life in the shape of a betterment of their conditions of living. The fulfilment of the Indian Revolution will now be judged in terms of the harsh realities of administrative performance. What is, therefore, called 'good government' is nothing less than the practical accomplishment of the entire faith and philosophy of a new social order, the golden trial of which the Indian masses have followed ever since the days of the freedom struggle.

'Good government' is nothing esoteric. Although while discussing it one talks of 'structures' and 'lines of command' and other formal abstractions, in substance good government touches on the daily life of every citizen in a multitude of ways. There is so much discontent presently — so much frustration, helplessness and anger — among the people at all levels regarding the functioning of the public administration in its day-to-day dealings with the citizen. Your telephones do not function properly; if you ring up and want the telephone attended to, nobody turns up for days. Letters that should reach in 24 hours do not reach for four, five, six days. Ration shops do not have the appointed supplies in time. The village accountant will not supply copies of record of right entries on due payment for weeks. Municipal services function perfunctorily, if at all. Railway tickets and reservations are black-marketed. School admissions and even school examinations are a racket. Hospitals and dispensaries would not attend to the patients as they should; or else some essential items like linen or cots or surgical instruments are wanting and somebody will not sanction them. The essence of good government is not something abstract or esoteric. It is no more and no less than the punctual and efficient discharge of all these and multitudinous other everyday chores.

Government is more an art than a science. It is a question of performance rather than theory or exposition. However, there are certain major issues into which the problem can be broken down for consideration.

A decisive virtue in the field of administration is certainty and clarity. Democracy does *not* mean slovenliness or ambivalence in decision. In a democracy, prior to decision-making,

whether in popular assemblies or at other levels, there must be lively responsiveness to public opinion and wide canvassing of pros and cons. However, there is a sharp distinction between the processes that precede decision-making and those that follow. Administration is necessarily hierarchical and after a decision is given, the word of command must be clear and unambiguous.

Another outstanding virtue in administration strikingly deficient in our set-up today is the failure to locate responsibility at different points of the administrative hierarchy. This implies administrative leadership which in its turn implies the art of delegation. It also implies that all the various functionaries in the administrative structure, from Minister and Secretary down to the meanest functionary, will perform at their appropriate levels, neither above nor below them.

Above all, good government implies coherence and co-ordination at the policy-making levels. In a parliamentary democracy, the Ministers in the Government are charged, among other things, with administrative leadership. The professional administrative structure below them is only the vehicle of policy. It is the machinery for transmuting the impulses which would be imparted by the policy-makers, faithfully and efficaciously down the line.

This is no place for going into the details of the numerous problems of structure and orientation which will have to be considered for the building up of a good government in India. All these issues are now being gone into by a high-powered body called the Administrative Reforms Commission under the chairmanship of Shri Morarji Desai. I will content myself with two or three broad observations.

I maintain that our administrative personnel resources are intrinsically as good as the best in the world. Given the necessary climate at the political level, an appropriate organisation and structuring and allocation of powers and responsibilities, the machinery would rise to any professional calls made on its capacity.

The government of today calls for higher levels of comprehension, intelligence and managerial capacity than it ever did in the past. This is a world trend and its incidence in the

Indian situation implies a challenge greater than the average. The requirements of the mid-twentieth century all over the world call for much more than soapbox oratory or the stock-in-trade of the demagogue or the facile amateur. The capacity to turn a phrase or to fabricate a slogan is no longer adequate for a politician in office. The political administrator of today requires for his background, skills, comprehensions and intellectual attainments, much more exacting than what was required of him before.

A word must be said about the important problem of purity in administration which is such a crucial ingredient of good government.

So far as the administrative ranks themselves are concerned, the control of corruption is merely a matter of administrative mechanics. The reform of dilatory, inept, ill-conceived regulations and procedures — which often make possible, even if they do not breed corrupt practices — together with the better enforcement of the traditional methods of vigilance and enquiry will quickly bring the evil under control.

It is the corruption at the political level which is the really intractable issue. A good part of the administrative corruption is also directly or indirectly ascribable to it.

Indian public life has been besmeared in recent years with a lot of scandals of political nepotism and corruption. Many of these whether real or fancied have been the happy hunting ground of political opponents both in the legislatures and outside. These stories of moral depravity in high offices, whether true or false, have been highly degrading and coarsening for the standards of our public life. The correct remedy for the situation is to be sought not merely by ordering *ad hoc* inquiries whenever reasonable grounds are disclosed but in a *permanent institutional set-up* which would cut the evil at the root without noise or fanfare. The institution of an Ombudsman or Lokpal as called by the Administrative Reforms Commission, with the authority to investigate all such cases at the highest levels, including the Ministers, is the obvious answer to this

situation.

A word may be said about the need for economy in Government expenditure. Economy is really a component and concomitant of an organic, well-knit administrative complex. Apart from obvious wastes and extravagances which must, of course, be ruthlessly suppressed, the large economies of public outlay will have to come as a bye-product of fundamental administrative reform. They can flow when 'financial control' is organised not as merely an exercise in penny-pinching parsimony, but imaginatively to secure the larger economies of speed, of bold planning, quicker accrual of benefits, within a competent view of the logistics of marshalling men and materials on the job. For this to come about, you need not only a thorough-going overhaul of administrative mechanics but also a profound re-orientation of attitudes. It is finally a compact, workmanlike administrative organisation, neat, spruce and well articulated, with definite lines of command and specific charging of duties and responsibilities that would perform the tasks of government not only with much greater efficiency but at enormously reduced cost.

There are no sensational short-cuts to good government. There are no spectacular solutions either. What is wanted is a patient siege. A little alteration here; a little adjustment there; here some minor surgical cutting of Gordian-knots; the steady building up of right procedures and morale; the nurturing of initiatives; the rewarding of merit; the ceaseless hunting down of inefficiency and delay; here and there a frontal assault to reduce some stubborn bastion of vested interest or some huddle of departmental jealousies. The administrative machinery is like a stringed instrument. It quickly runs down. It can, however, also very quickly be tuned up. I venture to quote what I wrote on this subject five years ago:

"Correctly tackled the machinery of Administration in any State and indeed even at the Centre can be geared and tuned up within six months; and there is no reason why there should not be as rapid improvement in the outer formations and

echelons; the pack of cards is there and contains all the tricks; all that is needed is to build it up into appropriate suites and play the cards discerningly. I believe it can be done not only at the Centre but all over the administrative field; and the broad masses of Indian humanity who have just woken up to a dawn after a long, wearisome, oppressive night and would be the direct beneficiaries of such a transformation, deserve no less."

Socialism

Congress was initially a middle-class movement of revolt against the British Raj. It was the social idealism of Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru that moved it to become the authentic voice of the aspirations of the entire people of India. It is by this saving grace and virtue that it has been able to endure as the operative political force in free India. What happens when the base remains narrow and the beneficiaries of freedom are only the white-collared and the new elite of anti-colonial struggle, is witnessed in Ghana, Indonesia, Nigeria and scores of other newly enfranchised countries.

The cardinal principles of Indian policy have been settled in the initial years after the advent of freedom; secularism, peace, democracy, socialism. A body of doctrines has been evolved to furnish the guidelines to the steady groundswell of national policy in these respects. However, it has to be confessed that one of the areas in which a great deal more remains to be done is the practical implementation of a socialist philosophy for the re-structuring of the Indian economy.

It has to be remembered, however, that our socialism is derived from a set of drives and motivations different from that of the Communists. It is derived from our cherishing of respect for individual personality and the dignity of man. It is rooted in our anxiety to furnish to every man, woman and child an equal opportunity to develop his or her personality. We have adopted a system of mixed or plural economy and are prepared to nurture individual initiative and enterprise in certain fields of activity within the disciplines of the public good. We

look upon society not as an unremitting war between economic interests but as a co-partnership in which wealth and privilege are a trust even as the self-respect and dignity of the commonest labourer are a charge and an obligation on the social conscience.

The dragooning of the rich and the privileged, the hysterical and bloodhappy vengeance on entire classes in the name of historical inequities, are not only revolting to our cultural tradition but also to our contemporary values of humanity and civilised conduct. We abhor, in short, the mass baitings, public trials and brain-washing, which were portended in the phrase "the strangulation of the last capitalist with the entrails of the last priest". We abominate the outrages, vandalism and atrocities that are currently being carried out on whomsoever or on whatsoever their dislike may light upon, whether in culture or literature or on individuals professing slightly deviating opinions, by the so-called red-guards or the new Nazis of China.

We seek the emancipation and uplift of the under-privileged *through the laws* and by the orderly liquidation of all elements of exploitation in society, under the democratic pressures of public opinion.

In practical terms what does socialism mean in India?

It means in the field of agriculture the strengthening of peasant proprietorships and helping our 70 millions of peasant-households to make a better living out of the tiny pieces of land that they hold. To this end, various reforms such as the abolition of the zamindari, the grant of secured, regulated tendencies, the control of rack-renting, the imposition of land ceilings, etc., have been enacted. As we have noticed elsewhere, there has been considerable dragging of feet in respect of land reforms in several State administrations. Obviously, this will have to be remedied and all the other necessary steps taken to block the loopholes in the implementation of these beneficent measures. In order that the small peasant-proprietor may derive economies of scale, we must also think in terms of supporting him with a wide network of cooperatives for credit,

for irrigation, for mechanised operations, for marketing and for processing of agricultural produce.

Over the last few years, a new and important segment of the economy has developed in the field of industries. This is the public sector. It lies principally in the fields of metallurgy, heavy engineering, machine-building and oil exploration, which aim at developing self-reliance in the economy. The public sector must obviously be assigned a large and normative role in our economy. Given the immensity of the tasks to be undertaken, the distributional contours of the present economy and the imperative compulsions of social justice, it is evident that the State will have to play a decisive role in many fields of economic activity. It will have to command all the strategic heights of the economic landscape including banking and financial institutions and trading.

There would, however, remain a vast area for private initiative and enterprise. Nationalisation or taking over to the public sector is obviously no universal nostrum. For many sectors of industrial activity, the better arrangement may be to leave the actual operation in private hands, retaining for the State the general responsibility for oversight backed by the necessary controls and regulations to enforce whatever disciplines of price, production or technology it may be necessary to do in the national interest.

The posing of an eternal antithesis between the private and the public sectors is misconceived. A supporting and supplementary relationship between the two forms of organisation is both practicable and rewarding. A cloak and dagger theory of economic villainy is as out of date in modern conditions as the villain dressed up in hooves and claws is out of date on the modern stage.

Then there is the big issue about the concentration of economic power. Industrial development has a natural trend towards concentrating the means of production in a few hands. Economies of scale and modern technology dictate the size of industrial enterprise. Foreign collaborators naturally prefer big parties and well-established indigenous set-ups to small parties or newcomers. In an economy so replete with scarcities and

shortages—an inevitable feature during the transitional stage—the big parties have a far superior chance of obtaining positions of dominance and the advantages accruing therefrom. Banks and financial institutions customarily offer their assistance by preference to the big parties on the basis of their bankable securities. Self-financing out of depreciation reserves and retained earnings is an indispensable means in an economy striving for growth and this again makes for the 'snowballing' of economic ownership and power. All these factors predispose towards intensifying the distortions in our economy and building up bigger industrial empires.

It is a necessary part of our strategy of industrial development that these trends, howsoever natural during this transitional stage, should be decisively halted and reversed. The large public sector programmes, the deliberate promotion of village industries and small industries sector, fiscal levies discriminating in favour of the small producer, the setting up of financial institutions for the provision of credit to small enterprises, the deliberate policies of locational decentralisation of industry, stringent Company Law regulations—all these measures are designed towards countering this trend and curbing the distortion. The recent decisions regarding the abolition of managing agency system in a number of traditional industries and about the setting up of a statutory commission for the control of monopolies, are further important steps in the same direction.

Many more purposeful, vigorous and determined steps will have to be taken for adequately implementing such a policy. The policy of industrial licensing in particular will have to be implemented with greater determination in the future to prevent concentration of economic power.

This can be done in several ways. There is no justification for instance to allow the big industrial houses to go into 'soft' industries, not involving large outlays, or long gestation periods or not making a draft on large technological or managerial resources. The resources of the big houses should be channelled into the doing of the really hard jobs in the economy, leaving the softer lines of enterprise in the consumption industries to smaller entrepreneurial set-ups. Such a drive can be fur-

ther reinforced by the financial institutions, adopting supporting policies. At the other end special incentives will have to be devised to bring up a class of technician-entrepreneurs by giving them special assistance as against the trader turned industrialist who has no interest in craftsmanship or industrial development and is merely interested in the size of the turn-over and the rate of return. It is not necessary to spell out here the details of such policies.

One of our important objectives in the strategy of industrialisation is decentralisation of industry both in space and as far as practicable in the technological processes.

We envisage that there will be a modern sector of industry alongside of village industries, handicrafts, small industries and other elements in which more labour-intensive techniques will be deliberately adopted in order to provide employment. In short, we envisage the co-existence of the 'Boeing and the bullock-cart' for their respective distinct purposes. Where modern industry requires automation for technological reasons or for reasons of efficiency in the international market, we would not hesitate to adopt such techniques. At the same time, where the economic sacrifice involved is not considerable and is worth-while in the national interest having regard to the larger employment that we would be able to provide thereby, we would deliberately adopt less advanced or intermediate techniques of production and foster small industries, village crafts, etc.

From the locational point of view, we envisage that as much as possible of the industrial activity will be decentralised. In particular, huge industrial complexes like the metropolitan centres of Bombay, Calcutta, Ahmedabad, Kanpur, Delhi, etc., would not be allowed to grow. These industrial conurbations as we have noticed already create extremely difficult civic problems within themselves besides entailing, the degradation of lakhs of workers who have to go there in search of employment leaving their villages and giving up their home life.

The policy of industrial licensing; promotional measures for

improved credit, marketing, raw material availability to small scale industries; the deliberate location of new industrial units, small and large, in new 'growth centres' rather than in the old overcrowded metropolitan centres of industry; the identification and promotion of intermediate technology in appropriate industrial processes; reservation where necessary through licensing or 'common production programmes' of particular areas of industrial activity for village and small industries protecting them from being swept off by large scale organised industry; promotional programmes for the development of village industries and crafts; the encouragement of industrial cooperatives;—a whole battery of such practical measures of policy are necessary if this philosophy of industrialisation is to be actually implemented

How far have we been able to tackle the problem of unemployment and under-employment in the economy under our planning?

Between 1951 and 1961, the labour force in India increased by about 21 millions. It is estimated that employment was provided during this period for 17 millions. Unemployment at the commencement of the Third Plan period was estimated at about 7 million altogether. During the Third Plan period, the labour force increased by 17 millions and the additional employment created is estimated at 14½ millions. Thus, the backlog of unemployment at the beginning of the Fourth Plan is probably of the order of 9 to 10 millions. In the Fourth Plan period, the labour force will have a net addition of 23 millions against which the physical programmes included in the Plan are expected to provide employment for some 19 millions. A further provision to take care of perhaps a million or two by an additional allocation for rural employment schemes is considered probable.

We have to reflect what the situation would have been if there had been no planning and no organised effort at least to close the gap as much as possible between the creation of jobs and the additional numbers thrown on the labour market by

the increase in population! A ceaseless and wide-flung search for every scrap that we can add to the volume of employment generated within the economy is a necessary part for the implementation of a socialist strategy in our conditions.

Several other supporting measures are also necessary at the other end. Some of them may be mentioned although there is no space here nor is this the occasion to go into their details. It is necessary for the maintenance of public morale as well as to avoid waste, to curb the ostentatious and conspicuous consumption of the handful of rich persons in the community. Tax evasion is another large and corroding evil; part of it may be due to contrarities and ineptitudes of the taxation system. These should, of course, be corrected. Side by side there has to be a much more rigorous enforcement and blocking of loopholes.

There has been much racketeering and speculation in urban land transactions. This has also been a popular hide-out for black-money. The high urban prices have made house-owning by the poor and the middle sections of the society virtually impossible in our metropolitan centres. Both as a foundation for an adequate urban housing programme and for checking the evil of land speculation and for hunting out the recesses where black-money lurks, a determined attack on the problem of urban land values is called for.

The expansion in the social services steadily going on under planning is in itself a measure of equalisation of opportunities and thus a step in the direction of socialism.

Wider opportunities for self-betterment through professional training arrangements in industry, an extensive scheme of loan-scholarships to provide opportunities for higher education to boys and girls from households who cannot afford it themselves, are some more measures that could be taken for broadening and deepening the groundswell of socialism.

An ounce of well-implemented practical programmes for betterment is worth a ton of slogans and political breast-beat-

ing by our lip-socialists. It is principally because in the formulation and implementation of policies we have not been determined enough that our performance as regards socialism has been so short of our pronouncements. All this, however, can be quickly put right if there is a vigorous and determined political leadership.

There is also the much advertised issue about the control over the country's commercial banking system. Of course, there can be no question that there should be no hesitation in taking whatever steps may be necessary for re-orienting the banking system fully to support development in the economy. Banks are repositories of the savings of the community. It is right and proper that the banking system should be so structured and managed that the savings flow into the most fruitful and rewarding channels. Any measures necessary for accomplishing this must be taken.

The following facts are, however, relevant in this connection. The Reserve Bank has extensive powers of supervision and control over banks. It can prohibit certain types of loans and advances and issue directives among other things, to exercise selective credit control. Apart from the formal powers, there is a wide area of prestige, influence and informal counselling through which the Reserve Bank is in a position to bring about desired orientations in the policies of banks.

With the nationalisation of the Imperial Bank of India and the constitution of seven State associated Banks, as subsidiaries of the State Bank of India, Government has at hand a widespread network of branches of commercial banks all over the country. The State Bank and its associates control nearly a third of the total deposits of the banking system and between them have nearly 2,000 branches.

It is not as if the profits, after payment of tax, which the banks derive on their equity capital are anything very substantial. In 1964, the net profit, after tax provision, for the entire banking system, was of the order of Rs. 17 crores.

What is much more important than change of ownership in the

share capital of the banking system is the re-orientation of its working. Modelled on the British system, the banking system of the country concentrates, apart from financing trade, almost wholly on the provision of working capital to industry. In Britain, however, conditions are wholly different because they have an extremely well-organised capital market, relatively ample funds and an extensive and long-established public habit of industrial investment. In India, on the other hand, the capital market, at the best of times, has a very narrow foundation of investing public. A number of institutions have been set up for providing capital financing to industry in recent years. The total impact of all this institutional finance has, however, not been anything so large and diverse as it could be, if the banking system itself were, as in West Germany and Japan, to advance a proportion of capital finance for industrial development. Besides, today the banking system is organised principally for the service of large units located in large cities rather than for service of smaller units located in smaller townships of the countryside. Lastly, in the banking practice of the country there is an excessive insistence on giving loans and advances against the security of big names rather than the profitability of enterprises and the merits of the enterprise.

An overhaul and re-orientation of these structures and practices of the banking system will be far more rewarding to the economy than any change in the ownership of the equity capital of banks.

The public sector

We have adopted as the basic principle of our economic organisation a system of mixed or plural economy. In a plural economy both private and public sectors operate side by side, each according to its own laws of metabolism.

As we have been planning to catch up quickly on the lag of industrial development, the State has had to take initiative in several critical industrial investments and development programmes. Some industries are basic and seminal to industrial growth such as, for instance, steel or coal or machine-building.

Some other industries have a significance from the point of view of self-reliance far transcending the mere cash-flows of the activity that they represent; such as, for instance, oil, petroleum refineries, shipping, aircraft production, nuclear industries, electronics. Apart from these, in order to fashion the pattern of economic growth according to its ideas of social justice the State may want to control the commanding heights of the economy which have a profound influence on the texture of economic life. These would be institutions in the field of banking, insurance and trading activities. Over all these fields a considerable public sector has developed in India over the years.

The public sector accounted for 22 per cent outlay under industries during the First Plan and 58 per cent in the Second Plan. In the Third Plan the outlay was 54 per cent and it is expected to be somewhat higher in the Fourth Plan. Altogether, over the first three Plan periods something like an outlay of Rs. 2,500 crores will have been incurred on public sector industries. Over Rs. 3,000 crores more will be invested in the course of the Fourth Plan.

Having regard to the role that the public sector is designed to play in the Indian economy and the massive investments that are taking place, the proper functioning of the public sector is a matter of the highest significance.

Many problems arise for consideration in this context. The proper constitution and organisation of public sector undertakings; the functioning and powers of the management of undertakings; the punctual and economical execution of projects and their successful working thereafter; the ensuring of the spirit of enterprise and initiative in the management of the undertakings without detriment to their public accountability—all these issues are relevant in this connection.

It is evident that public sector undertakings, other than public utilities, ought *not* to enjoy any special position in comparison with similar other private enterprises, whether it is in the matter of taxation or of labour laws or of allocation of raw materials or pricing of their products or government procurement or for release of foreign exchange.

Indeed, since we envisage the co-existence of the public and the private sectors indefinitely, we have to evolve for ourselves a new grammar for such co-existence. Sufficient guidance is not available in this field in the experience of the countries either of Western capitalism or of Communist societies. In the latter, as they have no private sector, the question of such co-existence does not arise. In the former, the private sector has such a wide and untrammelled field for operation that the issue of its co-existence with the limited public sector of those economies does not get so sharply focussed in their affluent conditions. So, this is another field wherein we in India have to blaze a new trail!

While some public sector undertakings, like the Hindustan Machine Tools, have standards of efficiency and management comparable to the best in the private sector; and while several other units, such as, for instance, the three Steel Plants, are gradually getting into stride after their teething troubles, the fact remains that from a large number of public sector enterprises the Indian economy is not deriving yet anything like the benefits that it should. It is principally a question of management. There are two sets of problems to tackle. One is the measures necessary to ensure that new public sector undertakings are established at minimum cost. The other is the problem relating to the efficiency and economic operation of the undertakings already established. This is no place to go into the details of these problems. I would content myself with the observation that given a proper institutional framework and an appropriate scheme of powers and responsibilities, there is no reason whatever why the public sector units should not function as well as the best in the private sector.

It might be mentioned in passing here that it would be wrong to suppose that all private sector enterprises are very economically or efficiently run either. Anybody familiar with the working of public companies knows how much managerial and technological inefficiency obtains in several of them. This is apart from the unnecessary loading of distribution costs, procurement costs and commissions—talking only of the costs that are brought to the books.

Our public sector undertakings have to be viewed not merely as an exercise in governmental management of commercial enterprise, but as vanguard items in the establishment of industrial democracy and as a powerful lever for the advent of a socialistic pattern of production. Today however they are still far removed from playing such a role. There is much reorientation needed to be done in this regard apart from improving their efficiency of management.

One India

There are large heterogeneous and even fissiparous elements in Indian political life. While these trends are fast running out and the image of a homogeneous Indian national community is daily becoming clearer, we have to make sure that the matrix is strong enough to withstand the occasional squalls and tempests in the period that will intervene before the groundswell of national integration would finally become inexorable.

It is not surprising that regional and linguistic loyalties cherished in different parts of the country occasionally work to the detriment of a united India. It is inevitable that it should take some time before the detritus of several centuries, in the shape of the historical and cultural rivalries and antagonisms between certain regional groups, is emptied out.

Consider for a comparison the concept of a single West European community. Europe, excluding Russia, is about the size of the Indian sub-continent and in the variety of cultures, language patterns and demography it has probably a heterogeneity comparable to that of the peoples of India. European statesmen and thinkers have for ages been wrestling with the phantom of a United States of Europe. A measure of integration, still very limited and peripheral, has only recently been attained under the compulsions of military defence and in the shadow of an overwhelming menace.

The linguistic reorganisation of States has now brought about a set-up in which the federal units represent regions much more organically united within themselves than the administrative entities that they replaced. A common system of

laws and a central judiciary, an identical administrative system, all-India services and an all-India political life at the national level, and above all, the steady pressure of economic forces under central planning are bringing out, inexorably, the rapid emergence of a single Indian community.

It is both impracticable and unnecessary to think in terms of re-creating a unitary State in India as the cure for regionalism and prescription for national unity. This would be putting the clock back to the days of Lord Curzon's regime and just cannot hold for a day. The suggestion is not only a counsel of despair; it simply will not work and cannot be done. It is wrong to blame the irrational rampages of regionalism on the reorganisation of States. It is not the lack of constitutional strength that has led to the recent spectacle of a weak Centre buffeted about by irrational regional pressures. It is the refusal to use that strength and the failure to combine it with political wisdom which has been at the root of the trouble. The cure lies in a rectification of these defects.

While I believe that the reorganisation of States on the lineaments of the large language groups has now created a set-up more in conformity with the organic unities inherent in the multiplex nationhood of the Indian sub-continent, several lumps of heterogeneity will persist, for many decades to come, in the Indian body politic. In the first place, there are and will always remain, and indeed steadily increase, large numbers of linguistic minorities all over the country. All such minorities must have the unqualified assurance of just treatment in respect of their educational and cultural activities as well as the guarantee of equal trading facilities and employment openings, subject to necessary qualifications including those of local linguistic ability. The emergence of a single nationality and the affirmation of an equal citizenship enshrined in the Indian Constitution ought to become daily more and more a living reality with the dynamism and growth of modern industry. There do, however, occur many retrovert trends and backward eddies while the groundswell advances. There are the clamorous shrieks of a South versus North controversy; there are inter-

State river disputes and heroic passes between some of the riparian States; there are outstanding issues of marginal adjustments to boundary-lines between some States; there are loud tub-thumpings and protestations against the alleged 'Hindi imperialism' of the North; there are groushings about recruitment in public sector undertakings. These are, however, no more than the pains of a historically inevitable evolution and while each such issue needs handling with delicacy and sympathy, the sweep of the general tide is irreversible.

Indian democracy has had to cope with several such explosive issues and ride out so many storms in these years since freedom. Time and again issues have arisen which have strained the outfit of the federal republic not only until it creaked but until it looked as if the seams were going to come off!

As in the past so in the future, if there is patient, comprehending and sincere national leadership at the top, tempers will cool down, views will get reconciled and like the sun after the cloud-burst a broad consensus of agreed opinion will emerge amongst all persons of goodwill. One of the most heartening features of Indian democracy is the way in which in the country's Parliament (sometimes in spite of terribly bad handling by the leadership!) diametrically opposite points of view get reconciled and eventually a national consensus emerges and prevails. Our democratic machinery has so far successfully withstood the stupendous strains and stresses imposed in the process of our evolving national unity. The way is steadily being paved to the inexorable evolution of a more coherent and united concept of a single Indian nationality.

I do not, therefore, take a very tragic view of these essentially ephemeral frictions and distempers. The portents are that, under wise and comprehending leadership, public opinion will view these issues in the right perspective. While there will be much argumentation and canvassing on every disputed issue, a just dispensation will find resounding support in the minds of all men of goodwill.

The safety valve that was available to release and neutralise these distempers in the shape of the personality of a charismatic leader, *accepted equally in all the regions*, is no longer

available to us now. We have, therefore, to institutionalise the mollifying influence that such an outstanding leader exercised. Whether it is the question of locating a steel plant, or an oil refinery or a public sector undertaking or the distribution of scarce water potential of a river system passing through different States or the allocation of Central assistance or the re-adjustment of boundaries between States, we must establish methods and machinery for convincing all people of goodwill that just and impartial decisions, actuated solely by national interest, are being arrived at. Particulars of such machinery are not difficult to formulate. A great deal of the present trouble arises besides on account of the absence of a responsible and objective presentation of all the pros and cons of various disputed issues. Its absence provides a fertile ground for politicians to stake out their regional and chauvinistic claims, to whip up parochial sentiments against alleged injustice to a particular region and generally to muddle and befoul the national climate. This goes for all our political parties. We have seen repeatedly how party alignments are obliterated and national loyalties are disregarded when regional pressures develop. Handled with patience, comprehension and objectivity, however, there is no reason why we should not be able to reach national, acceptable solutions on all such issues and win for them the resounding support of all persons of goodwill drawn from all regions of the country.

I believe that positive national integration is to be sought principally, however, in the literary, cultural and social fields. All Indian languages and literatures have a wide spectrum of similarity, if not identity, amongst themselves. All our regional literatures draw heavily upon our epics and the 'puranas', on the Sanskrit language and literature and naturally reflect the broad multiple stream of Indian tradition flowing down the centuries. The cultural forms and practices, the ways of living, the modes of speech and thought, the schemes of values, food and habits are all broadly common over the sub-continent. The fundamental unities of India are so strong and abiding that the mutual goodwill of the mass of people of different regions has

remained unaffected by the occasional squalls agitating the political surface at any particular time. The regional agitations and outbursts are only a transitory, superficial occurrence — though frightening while they last — even as the hurricane lashes up the surface of the sea while the vast depths below remain unmoved and placid.

The deepening and vitalising of Indian unity is to be sought in a wider and growing cultural intercourse between the different linguistic regions; in Universities; in industrial complexes; in the bazaars and market-places; at literary gatherings; in dance, music, cinema, theatre and the visual arts. It is in fact being constantly achieved. If only we hold at bay the machinations of the politician, fishing for himself and troubling the placid waters of Indian unity for the purpose, the job will be accomplished.

Peace

With the attainment of independence, India was suddenly catapulted in the world stage as an independent nation with the freedom to frame its own foreign policy.

This foreign policy has throughout these years been guided by certain basic urges and ideals.

The world in which New India is called upon to play its independent role after the lapse of many centuries, is a world living under the menacing shadow of a 'push button' war. Should it occur, the greater part of civilised centres of population could be wiped out and the story of mankind itself might conceivably come to an end!

While war has become incalculably horrifying, Peace has to be ensured with Justice and cannot be purchased at any price. The old colonialism has been liquidated except for some islands of superlative racial bigotry like South Africa, Rhodesia and the remaining Portuguese possessions. However, the sudden political enfranchisement of ex-colonial populations has created numerous problems in the newly emerging nations which have replaced the former colonies.

In the post-war international scene the most outstanding circumstance was the mutual confrontation of the two 'power blocs' in which the major powers of the world had polarised.

India had to pick out its way in the post-independence years through these mine-fields of foreign policy. Indian foreign policy has throughout these years steadily asserted the objectives of non-involvement in the conflicts of the power blocs; melioration of world hatreds and jealousies; promotion of trade, commerce and cultural intercourse between nations; peaceful co-existence of countries with diverse political systems and economic ideologies; sympathy for and support to the liberation movements in the colonial countries in the world; and an undeviating antagonism to the doctrines of racial superiority.

India has always loyally supported and sought in every way to strengthen the United Nations and to build it up for the safeguarding of collective security and for the easement of international tensions.

India's policy of non-involvement in military blocs and non-alignment with the power systems confronting each other in the world is, however, not to be mistaken as merely a negative approach. It has rather been a policy of dynamic neutrality. On the positive side we have always backed and promoted all measures for international intercourse in trade, commerce and culture. While always trying to limit the incidents and to work for the orderly elimination of underlying causes for conflict, on the positive side India has consistently worked for increasing areas of peace and for helping to evolve a modus of co-existence between nations.

It is within this broad framework that the specific relations of India with its near and distant neighbours have to be viewed.

Historically India has had since ancient times very close relations with the religions, cultures and civilisations of Middle-east as well as of South-east Asia. During two centuries of British rule, India had been forcibly quarantined from these cultural affiliates and geographical neighbours. These relation-

ships have now been revived. Indeed, there is room and need for their vigorous enrichment still further.

Towards the land-locked Himalayan kingdoms of Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim, India has consistently conducted itself with friendliness and respect for their independence. The special interests of India in these territories are manifest, but these small countries enjoy today a far greater measure of independence than they ever dared to exercise under the British.

That India continues to press the case of China for admission to the United Nations in spite of the happenings of the last few years, as she has consistently done over the years past, is a resounding testimony to the sincere loyalty of India to the principles of international co-existence. One may abominate the ways of Chinese communism; one may hold that the communist regime is 'illegitimate' and is founded on terrorism and the dragooning of the Chinese masses. The Indian stand has been that, whatever that may be, it does not help the solution of international issues, some of them deeply touching the Chinese people, to bury your head ostrich-like in the sands of righteousness and legitimacy and repudiate the very existence of what is now a hard and indisputable fact. The membership of the United Nations does not imply for each member that he accepts the ethical title of contemporary authority in each of the member nations. Least of all, does it imply that each member agrees with the economic and political philosophies on which the different authorities found their regimes? Indeed, it is because different people abominate heartily each other's economic and political creeds that it is necessary to get them to come into an international forum. The membership of the forum is founded merely on a common desire to avoid collective suicide.

China has recently joined the nuclear club by exploding a nuclear contraption. India's scientific status as regards atomic development is acknowledged to be high. She has hitherto refrained from using its atomic capability for warlike preparation in the nuclear stock-piles of the club members. This has been in the hope that the world will soon evolve effective arrangements for non-proliferation as well as for order-

India's stand in this regard as a near-nuclear power has a vital significance for the success of the efforts for nuclear disarmament. It is hardly necessary to add that in the interest of her defence, India may be compelled to move appropriately should a nuclear detente not come about soon.

It is in the light of these general considerations that one has to view the special problem of the relations of India with Pakistan. Certain obvious facts may be first stated. However much many Indians (and perhaps not an inconsiderable number of Pakistani citizens themselves) may have deplored the partition of the country, it is common sense that the advent of Pakistan as an independent State must now be accepted as a fact of life.

India's attitude to Pakistan must be one not only of sufferance or reluctant acceptance but of genuine friendliness. We are entitled to expect reciprocation of the same sentiment from Pakistan.

The people of India and Pakistan belong to the same racial stock. They have been part of the Indian community over a long period until the other day. The two countries have shared a common economic life, a common history, a common cultural tradition. Pakistani and Indian economies have many organic unities. Both countries face the same problems of economic development against a common background of general poverty and inadequacy of investment resource.

All the outstanding problems between the two countries ought to be resolved in a spirit of mutual understanding and appreciation of each other's difficulties. The political objectives of both countries are identical, namely, freedom to develop internally, non-involvement in world conflicts and sustenance of their newly won independence. If the issues are properly approached, not only can most of the outstanding disputes be settled but, maybe, in due course, the two countries may even agree to a mutually articulated policy of defence, since defence requirements of the sub-continent have many common features.

There have been many ups and downs in the story of Indo-

Pak relationship in the last nineteen years. It is, however, the involvement of Pakistan in a military alliance with the Western Powers which became the turning-point and thereafter a persistent factor in the bedevilment of the relationship between the two countries. Pakistan's military alliances have upset the balance of power in the Indian sub-continent and have inevitably led to competitive armament and mutual impoverishment. One of the streaks of light in an otherwise gloomy picture has been the conclusion of the Indus Water Treaty between the two countries some years ago. The Tashkent Agreement, after India had repelled Pakistan's aggression vigorously and successfully, is another landmark which, if it is carried forward in the true spirit, in other areas of differences, might yet become a watershed to mark an increasing improvement of relations between the two countries.

Incidentally, whenever the leaders and politicians have got out of the way, and the people of the two countries have been given a chance to co-mingle, they have spontaneously fraternised!

We may briefly notice the question of Defence. Briefly, not because it is not vitally important, but because the line of action in this field is so indisputable. Modern Defence requires a wide base of industrial capability. The development of an adequate infra-structure of industry thus not only gives the economy its leverage for viable growth but also underpins and secures Defence. During the Indo-Pakistani war of September 1965 there were loud squeals from Pakistan when there was an announcement that foreign warlike supplies to both the contestants would be stopped. The Pakistan High Commissioner in London complained bitterly that this was unfair to Pakistan because while India depended only to the extent of 20 per cent on foreign imports, Pakistan depended to the extent of 80 per cent of its requirements. This was the clearest possible vindication of the industrial strategy that India had been following in the earlier years. Basic industries like steel and machine-making, oil exploration and refining, basic chemicals had given punch and muscle to the Indian defence effort even

though the fat of the consumer goods production was correspondingly thinner.

The Indo-Pakistan military engagement of August-September 1965 had a tremendous impact on the mass psychology of free India. The nation woke up to a man. The 'rice-soldiers' of the latter day dramatically became the gallant jawans and universal darlings of the nation. India had been stirred to yet another and a profound dimension of national consciousness. Given the high spirit of the people as evinced on this occasion and the sustenance and nourishment of an adequate industrial capability, national Defence should have no difficulty in coping with the requirements of our situation.

The language problem

The question of languages in India has been a live issue of controversy in recent years. Yet, properly viewed, the principles on which the matter can be satisfactorily resolved, are clear enough.

What are the facts? India has about a dozen main regional languages with literatures of their own. There are a large number of dialects approximating more or less to some one or other of these main regional languages. The languages fall into two large groups, namely, those of Sanskrit origin and the Dravidian languages.

The regional languages are rich in content, drawing their vocabulary from the immense reservoirs of Sanskrit and to some extent Persian and Arabic. Some of them are very forceful, picturesque and graphic and with a little cultivation ought to make quite adequate vehicles of expressions for the modern age. Whatever the common national language or languages may be, the regional languages of India would always have an important place in the life of the different communities by which they are spoken. The development of these languages and the promotion of related literatures must be a matter of vital concern to all interested in national re-construction.

The question of language ought to be looked at objectively and not from the point of view of racial or cultural pride. A

language evolves around the life of a community and its texture and idiom become a part of the social existence of that human group. A language is fragrant and replete with the cultural peculiarities, the historical memories and the incidents and episodes of the life-history of the community by which it is spoken.

The language pattern of India is bound to take shape broadly in response to the *objective requirements* of the situation. It would be wrong for public policy to force large numbers of people to learn languages for which they have no need in their daily lives. Public policy should be directed towards giving those few aids and encouragements that are necessary for facilitating and accelerating the evolution of a language pattern responsive and adapted to the needs of the situation, dynamically conceived.

Language is the vehicle of expression. The learning of languages not necessary for occasions of expression or inter-communication of thought will not stick. Of all narrow and irrational bigotries, these language patriotisms are the least defensible. Language is ever the instrumentality. It is not language but education that is the aim in schools. It is not language but communication and intercourse which is the aim in life and literature. Surely, that which lends itself best to these objectives is the correct solution of the problem.

Literacy in the English language extends to no more than about one per cent of the population and is limited to the higher echelons of society. For this abundant reason, the English language can obviously never become a general national language for common intercourse between regions in our country. It will, however, continue to be cultivated, and should be cultivated, by those who will have occasion for using it and during the transitional period until it is replaced by Hindi. To condemn the English language as 'the badge of our slavery' is puerile and is indeed an expression of the fixation and the very enslavement of mind which it condemns.

With the reorganisation of States in the Indian Union largely on a linguistic basis, the regional languages have come into their own. As the regional languages are fast replacing the English

language in public administration, law courts and education in their respective regions, the need for developing Hindi as 'the link language' becomes naturally more urgent.

While no nation has so far had to face so complex a problem of national languages as India has had, I have no doubt that the language pattern will soon fall into proper array, if the various specific issues are approached in the correct spirit.

First of all, every language and literature represents a unique expression of culture and ought to be respected, preserved and enriched. It is needlêss to add that this goes equally for Urdu as well, which is wholly an Indian language, apart from its being a language of great vigour and beauty. All Indian regional languages and Hindi have great similarities and even identities of expression, idiom and phrase. The evolution of a common new terminology for them would greatly help a greater 'rapprochement' amongst the languages. During the period the official business in various areas is being gradually switched over from the English language to the Hindi and the regional languages in their respective spheres of replacement, a dynamic equilibrium will have to be maintained. This would mean a measure of bilingualism. English or Hindi/regional language in large areas and indeed even permanently. The Devnagari script is already current with slight local variations over a large number of important regional languages of India. If standardised, it will introduce a substantial additional element of identity in the Indian linguistic scene. Apart from the script, there is a substantial measure of identity in the alphabet system amongst practically all the Indian languages. A widespread propagation of the Devnagari script including in its embrace optionally the other languages which have scripts of their own, together with a widespread propagation of Hindi at any rate for purposes of 'comprehension' are essential positive elements towards the attainment of a pattern of multiplex linguistic unity.

Altogether, while it was once the subject of major controversies, handled with understanding and sympathy, the language issue need no longer cause any serious disturbance in the unity and coherence of Indian public life.

VI

A FAITH AND PHILOSOPHY

We are engaged in India today not merely in the work-a-day operations of nation-building; simultaneously, and considered from a more elevated viewpoint, we are engaged in the practical working out of a distinct philosophy of life, and indeed in the fulfilment of a unique national destiny.

Have we got a coherent philosophy of national reconstruction?

Yes, emphatically so! Indeed, a unique and distinctive Indian philosophy of national regeneration and international co-existence.

What is this philosophy?

On the political plane, we believe in that body of doctrine and working philosophy broadly described as 'democratic socialism'. The elements of the doctrine have not been formulated into a coherent, self-consistent thesis. But the body of principles can easily be pieced together from (a) the writings of Gandhiji and Nehru; (b) the urges of the Indian Revolution prior to the attainment of independence and thereafter in the building up of a new society; and (c) the expression of these ideas and sentiments pragmatically in the programmes of national reconstruction adopted by India in the last nineteen years.

The main strands of the doctrine are a faith in the good sense and basic goodwill of human beings; the assertion of human dignity and equality as a first principle of social organisation; an urge to eliminate exploitation, gross inequalities and social injustice. The working philosophy is based on the avoidance of violence and the settlement of differences to the maximum extent in open democratic forum.

This view of society and this doctrine of social dynamics is in sharp contrast to the philosophy of communism and other variants of that doctrine of authoritarian and forcible change. The communist doctrine predicates a ceaseless war between different economic classes in society as against the partnership between economic classes postulated by democratic socialism. Communists envisage that vested interests will not be liquidated merely by democratic pressures unless they are forcibly suppressed and ruthlessly expropriated. Towards the attainment of such an end, the communists would not shrink to use any measure of violence they would consider expedient and would reckon such violence and bloodshed as the necessary price that must be paid for ushering in the 'millenium'. Communists are intolerant of the fumbblings, the ceaseless debates and, in general, the slow metabolism of the democratic processes. They envisage, at any rate during the long transitional stage until their millenium is at hand and the State is ready to 'wither away', a suspension of democratic freedoms and a period of dictatorship during which the proletariat would rule and steamroller its way.

For the democrat, the processes of discussion are themselves of value as an education of public opinion, apart from the greater acceptability of the conclusions reached thereafter. For dissipating the tensions, acerbities and distempers in the body politic, the democrat relies greatly on the safety-valve mechanism of the democratic forum of discussion. Especially in Indian conditions, wherein we traditionally seek to build a consensus of opinion and not merely force issues on the principle of a numerical majority, the democratic process is invaluable in reconciling differences and in the discovery of the *modus vivendi*.

The democratic socialist in India is as keen as the communist to remove all traces of economic exploitation; to secure social and economic justice; to ensure that the means of production are worked in the best interests of the general community and not for the monopolistic self-advancement of the owners of the means of production; to ensure that there is a general climate of equality and each man and woman and child is afforded the

best opportunity for the development of his or her personality. He, however, believes that these results would be procured more efficaciously and more lastingly and at less violence and expense of human values by the process of democratic pressures and public opinion than by the promotion of class hatreds, terrorism, escheats and expropriation.

On the economic plane, the political philosophy of democratic socialism is matched by the doctrines of a mixed or plural economy. Whereas the communist believes in the State ownership and management of means of production and pundits of free enterprise believe in unqualified *laissez faire*, a democratic socialist believes in the middle way. Private enterprise and initiative are of value in the organisation of economic life. At the same time the State cannot renounce its responsibilities over the results of the economic system and let the devil take the hindmost. On the other hand, nationalisation of the means of production can obviously not be used as a universal nostrum. Nationalisation often means delivering the consumers, bound hand and foot, to an industrial bureaucracy.

The organisation of production is a pragmatic issue to be decided in each specific case on its merits and not a priority on grounds of some abstract theory. Each issue must be considered in its special context within the general framework of the national economy. In underdeveloped countries a high proportion of the investment resources available in the community ought to go into long-term investments such as basic commodities and the infra-structure of industrial growth. In many cases these investments may not occur unless the State undertook them itself.

Then, so far as the relationship between the different economic classes is concerned, the philosophy of democratic socialism on the economic plane envisages the idea of a co-operative commonwealth. The interests of different classes are not necessarily or irrevocably at cross purposes one with another. Labour and capital, the urban and the rural masses, owners of property and their tenants, producers of agricultural goods and industrial commodities, the skilled and the unskilled, the white-collared and the working classes, fixed income

earners and those whose incomes are fluctuating — the interests of all these classes criss-cross each other in a multiplex pattern. While the gain of one may in particular cases be the loss of another, the larger purposes of the economy are subserved only by a viewpoint in which all the interests are comprehended in a co-partnership. In particular, it is necessary to promote by every possible means among the working classes an interest in the economic results of the units of production in which they operate. Hence the grant of security of tenure to tenants of agricultural land; the promotion of profit-sharing schemes in industrial enterprise; the active encouragement of the co-operative form of organisation in industry, trade and agriculture.

It must be recognised, in this context, that the communist doctrine itself has been undergoing profound changes with acquisition of new experiences and is not the same relentless dialectic of a proletarian dictatorship, and leonine violence for the elimination of class interests, that it used to be. The communist orthodoxy has now admitted of many variations based on diverse experiences and deriving from the different conditions in the new countries where communism has swept since the last war. Yugoslavia, Poland and Czechoslovakia, to mention but a few, have improvised their own working reconciliations between the orthodox doctrine and the local realities of social and economic life.

The fact of the matter is that many of our communist leaders are themselves a generation behind and are still clinging to the communist catechism on which they were brought up. That is why Pandit Nehru used to chide them as the out-dated exponents of borrowed doctrines long since abandoned in their countries of origin. It is astonishing how the revolutionaries of latter day settle down in course of time to become the bastions of a new orthodoxy. The world has moved fast since the horse and buggy days of both *laissez faire* and doctrinaire communism. It is in this sense that Pandit Nehru always used to say that it is no longer a question of ideology; it is a question of technology.

Modern politics itself is changing. The politics of today is governed not by the class interests of small coteries of people in different countries. It is governed by the imperatives of total welfare conceived in terms of the entire citizenbody of a national State. People all over the world have developed a consciousness of their rights to have a due share of the good things of life and to live at the levels of human dignity and decency which progress in science and technology has now made possible for all mankind. They are not bothered about doctrine or ideology. The twentieth century will be known not for the advances of science and technology, breath-taking as they have been. It will be known principally for being the epoch when, for the first time, mankind dared to think in terms of the welfare of entire mass of humanity. To this end, all economic and political institutions are being powerfully bent all the world over.

In India we have to consider in our special circumstances what forms and institutions, political, social and economic, we adopt to bring about the technological transformations that we need to establish a prosperous modern community informed by social justice. To this end, we have to adopt an eclectic and flexible and not a doctrinaire approach.

Secularism is a well established principle of governance in the country now and claims an overwhelming loyalty. India has long traditions of friendly co-existence of peoples confessing widely different faiths and drawn from diverse racial stocks and cultural groups. Secularism has, however, to mean, in keeping with the long Indian tradition of 'live and let live', not merely freedom of faith and worship but also the gradual mollification of caste divisions and above all in a positive sense, a genuine regard for the diversities of practice other than one's own. In a multi-plural society like that of India this is an indispensable precondition of social coherence.

But secularism does not mean godlessness. It means not so much a State without religion as a State which respects all religions. A 'Sarvadharmi' raj rather than a 'nidharmi' raj.

There is undoubtedly need for a gigantic revivalism in Hindu society. Unlike the Sikh, the Christian, and Muslim religions, Hinduism is not a faith with an established congregational form of public worship. The catholicity, looseness and plurality of the Hindu faith over the years had the perverse effect of developing many grotesque malformations. Religious mendicancy; parasitic and grasping priesthood hovering round temples and places of pilgrimage and degrading them; abuse and neglect of temples and places of worship; untouchability and other caste inhibitions and many others. The reform and eradication of these is no doubt in the main an undertaking for reformers and social leaders of the community. However, the State in free India does not have to and cannot like the British Raj remain loftily indifferent to these malpractices in the majority community. While the main drive for reform must come from voluntary effort, I believe that it is the duty of the State — in the best tradition of the princely States of yore — to nourish and facilitate such chastening movements.

This body of doctrine and working philosophy which represents the steady groundswell of national policy over the last nineteen years since independence must be viewed for its proper understanding in the long perspective of Indian history, thought and tradition. Tolerance and understanding; peace and compassion; adjustment of differences and the constant endeavour to evolve a consensus of opinion as the basis of action; the reconciliation of order and freedom, of social justice and change; these are historically the lessons and the tradition of Indian social life. The national policies of free India are naturally in consonance with these traditions of Indian culture. They not only enjoy the support of the intellectuals, but they also reflect the inarticulate sentiments of the broad masses of the country. The policies of India over these years are not to be viewed as merely the personal preferences or idiosyncracies of particular individuals or groups.

These ideals have evolved out of the thinking of the Indian people and have been repeatedly endorsed by them. There

have been differences as to details; as to programmes and procedures; and more especially in the field of implementation, as regards particular acts or omissions. But the main body of doctrine has consistently won sustained and overwhelming support.

I do believe that this faith and philosophy, properly articulated, has a compulsive appeal especially to the youth of the nation. Today, half the population of the country comprises persons who were born after World War II and came of age during years of independence. To them, the freedom struggle is only a historical memory and the national figures of that struggle only legendary heroes. To them the appeal of the Congress ideology lies not so much in its historic triumph as in its current promise as the working blueprint of national reconstruction. There is an intense human drama of hope and endeavour being staged before our eyes in tens of millions of Indian households. Our philosophy of national reconstruction adds up to a faith that can move not only scores of millions in India but also hundreds of millions all over the developing world, into self-fulfilment. If only we can carry the message over to the youth of India with the necessary imagination and faith, there is poetry, music and drama in this story to fire their imagination!

What about the student unrest that has swept across the land so dramatically in recent months? I say this is due not to any moral depravity or inherent defect of character in our boys but due to want of a shining idealism to engage their youthful energies. Give them but a call in the name of this faith and an opportunity to participate in this historic mission, and these evil tempers will disappear like dew after sunshine! Young men and women all over the world today are lukewarm towards orthodox ideologies whether of communism or of Free Enterprise. There is an abiding sense of rootlessness, frustration and disillusionment gripping youthful minds not only in India, but all over the world. Whatever the justification for this elsewhere, Indian youth, with this profound unfolding of the destinies of a seventh of the entire human race taking place before their eyes, have no cause for regarding themselves as

intellectual refugees and spiritual orphans. The cause is heroic; the Indian philosophy of national regeneration is a summoning to idealism that would warm the cockles of any poetic heart; if only they could witness a corresponding dedication and sincerity amongst those who are called upon to lead the country, their response would be overwhelming.

Kennedy used to describe himself as an 'idealist without illusions'. What the youth of today wants is idealism without ideology. I believe the Congress has an answer for the Indian youth in its faith and philosophy.

VII

NEW HORIZONS FOR AN OLD PARTY

It is through the political mechanism that the philosophy and faith of a national community are translated into programmes of action.

In a parliamentary democracy the political life of the community is expressed through its system of parties.

There are certain facts about the Indian political landscape from which flow a certain set of political compulsions. The Congress has commanded all these years since independence in all the constituent States a comfortable majority and an overwhelming preponderance in the Central Parliament.

It is true that the absence of a strong and stable party in Opposition knocks out one of the traditional assumptions for the successful working of parliamentary democracy. It is true enough that it is an unhealthy state of affairs in a democracy to have in power one political party which is under no fear of replacement on the one hand, and on the other, a set of opposition parties which cannot aspire to office and responsibility in the foreseeable future. There does not, however, seem to be a solution to this problem in the proximate future and we will have to live with it.

Political parties are not formed, nor do they flourish, according to textbook theories. They are the resultant of various political forces, personalities, historical developments and accidents. There is no law of nature that just as birds are born with two equal and balanced wings, parliamentary democracies should automatically be equipped with two balanced and comparable political parties which could alternate in office and thus hold each other in check. It would seem as if a multiple party pattern with one large, somewhat amorphous nationwide party

and several other smaller groupings or splinter parties would characterise our political landscape for several years to come.

There is undoubtedly room in the Indian political scene for a moderate or conservative party like the Swatantra Party. The conservative party would presumably argue the case for a greater measure of freedom to private enterprise and greater recognition to private profit as the motivation of production and generally oppose high levels of taxation, high targets of investment, State control and the urges towards distributional justice as against the claims of increased production. Such a conservative party would have a comprehensible platform but in Indian conditions, where the vast majority are have-nots and down-and-outs, such a philosophy of economic progress can never win a wide popular base.

Political parties on the extreme left of the Congress Party would have an obvious attraction in Indian conditions. But communism with its doctrines of violence, overthrow and expropriation; its postulates of a transitional iron dictatorship, although of the proletariat, for an indefinite period; its apotheosis of class struggle and continual class conflict; its spurning of spiritual values, goes so much against the grain of the Indian tradition and temperament that, barring a few working class concentrations, the party has been able to make but little headway.

The Jan Sangha and the Hindu revivalist parties have also a limited and diminishing attraction as the surviving elements of both Hindu and Muslim revivalism are in rapid retreat.

To the extent to which the Swatantra and Jan Sangha stand for purity in public life and good administration, these are already elements which are part of the political philosophy of the good Congressman. Elsewhere we have noticed how the proposed institution of lokpal properly worked would sterilise public life from graft and corruption. The Jan Sangha talks of Bharatiya Sanskriti and 'maryada'. These are part and parcel of Indian tradition and as such an integral element in the Congress idealism as well.

The socialist parties do not really have an independent political platform clearly distinguishable from the Congress ideo-

logy. Their differences with the Congress despite their heroic gestures finally boil down to differences of detail and procedure, of speed, emphasis and instrumentality. This is not to say that these are not important aspects. Their broad stance would, however, be identical with the Congress strategy in practice, chastened of its ambivalence and infirmities.

The anti-Congress political elements can and do join together every now and then to whip up some political agitation somewhere or to form *ad hoc* combinations for securing electoral adjustments. But the political ideologies and inspirations of the Swatantra and the Communists, the Jan Sangha and the Socialists are so wide apart and indeed inherently discordant that a sustained and stable partnership between these strange bed-fellows, so as to constitute a practicable alternative to the Congress for running the administration, is inconceivable.

All this would however, amount to no more than a negative merit based on the absence of a feasible alternative for the Congress Party. Want of confidence by the public in the Opposition is, however, not an adequate mandate for a political party summoned to such momentous tasks as the Congress Party is today in India. It is not sufficient for the Congress Party in India merely to win the elections. The Congress Party is much more than the ordinary political parties of Western democracies. In the stable and mature societies of the West, the current political problems do not involve such profound issues for the social and economic life of the related communities. The Congress Party in India wears the mantle of a revolutionary party which carried the country triumphantly to political emancipation during the freedom struggle. The Congress Party is the spearhead of the Indian revolution and it has yet to accomplish the fulfilment of that revolution.

Historically the Congress Party played for many years its role as the leader of the national movement for the emancipation of the country from the British yoke. During this period

it was not merely a political party but indeed a *national movement* embracing within its fold various shades and varieties of social, economic and political view-point. In fact, issues of economic ideology were largely academic before the advent of independence. The Party, therefore, functioned during the national struggle as a loose coalition of diverse patriotic elements derived both from the Left and the Right in respect of economic ideology. It is partly the continuing momentum of this groundswell of a merely patriotic nationalism which explains why even today there is not sufficient definition and alignment on economic policies and programmes within the Congress organisation. After Independence came the trials and tribulations of the Partition, the consolidation of freedom, the integration of States. The overwhelming need to build up a coherent Indian nationality continued and still abides.

Gandhiji is credited with having expressed the opinion that the Congress organisation should be dissolved after the attainment of independence. Presumably this was in part recognition of the fact that while the Congress always formed the spearhead, the stream of Indian nationalism comprised other currents and cross-currents as well. There were the moderates, the constitutionalists, the terrorists, the revivalists and several others. They all had striven in their own separate ways to build up the irresistible tide of public opinion and moral authority which eventually made the British Raj in India unsustainable. In part, the suggestion emanating from Gandhiji presumably signified the extreme revulsion of the Mahatma to the competition for power and pelf that had already set in within the organisation. Sardar Patel and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru are believed, however, to have held the contrary view which eventually prevailed. Granting the moral point of the Mahatma's wish, it has to be acknowledged that from a practical point of view, the decision to continue the organisation of the Indian National Congress after the attainment of freedom was the right decision. The need for national unity, stability and an organised focus for the building up of the national consensus was undoubtedly overriding in the conditions that prevailed over the sub-continent with the coming of freedom

and partition. Indeed, even now, considering the multiplicity and fragmentation of public life amongst political parties, considerations of unity and stability would still seem to require the continued existence of the only party which enjoys a wide political base in the national consensus.

Today the Indian National Congress is judged by the people in terms of its merits like any other political party in the country and not merely on the ground of the role that it played in the attainment of freedom. Any argument that the Congress should have been dissolved after the attainment of independence has, therefore, only a historic interest now and no contemporary force. But in retrospect, it would seem that, if perchance, the Congress had indeed been dissolved on the attainment of independence, it would have soon been found imperative to recreate it immediately thereafter for providing the elements of unity and stability so manifestly indispensable in the events that followed. Even today in the flux of party politics in India, the strongest element of national coherence and wide acceptance is still the Indian National Congress.

With the deepening and intensifying of the planning effort, however, the need for a greater clarity and definition in economic policies has greatly increased. Apart from functioning as a broad national front of democratic and economic progress, the Congress party will now have increasingly to resolve the contrarities of opinion held within its fold, to take unambiguous stands, and to forge and formulate clearcut policies directed towards accomplishment of practical tasks.

The discussions within the Party itself, the pulls to the Right and to the Left, the open debates between the protagonists are, in the Indian political set-up, the informal counterpart of the formal democratic assemblies for evolving the national consensus. The party is naturally an epiphenomenon or reflection of the prevailing structure and opinion in society. While the process of internal discussion and evolving of a consensus is a serviceable aid to the formal functioning of democracy, the Party will have in future increasingly to formulate definite policies after such canvassing for charging the political administrations that it will put in office.

The Congress has been and always will remain a party of compromises. This is no accusation in the Indian context. It is a party which reflects the broad spectrum of cultural and regional variety in India. It is also a party which takes into its reckoning the wide range of opinion entertained in the body politic of the free Indian society.

This makes for the need to evolve a consensus after deliberating pros and cons. But this does *not* mean that after the discussions have been held and the policy is formulated or the programme evolved on the basis of a consensus, there is excuse for ambivalence, drift, indecision or slovenliness in execution. There has to be a wide canvassing of opinion before a decision is reached. After a decision is reached, there has to be determined, purposeful, unwavering implementation of it.

One might reasonably claim for the Congress Party without Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru did so much to nourish and build up. About Panditji's other policies there may be differences, fear of contradiction one saving grace, one outstanding merit. This is its capacity for introspection and self-criticism. Few political parties in the world, with such standing and such record, would be found equally ready to withstand such a in and without, as the Congress Party has been. In this the Congress Party not only evinces its self-confidence but also truly reflects the spirit of democratic freedom of opinion which ceaseless barrage of criticism and censure, both from with-sometimes marginal, sometimes more than marginal; on his outstanding services to the firm founding of a democratic tradition in India there will be no dispute whatever.

We have had occasion to notice in these pages several defects and deficiencies of performance in the years since freedom. The major and indispensable step towards the rectification of past shortfalls is their frank exposure and admission. There is now a wide recognition amongst Congressmen themselves of the need for a sharper focus, a clearer definition in the Congress policies and a more determined and even ruthless implementation of these policies. Therein lies the hope and promise of a greater measure of fulfilment in the future.

Meanwhile, one has to notice with regret the frequent spec-

tacle of strife, indiscipline and groupism that has been manifested in the regional Party organisations in different parts of the country. If these differences were on grounds of ideology or of programmes or of public policy, one could understand them. However, for the greater part, they seem to revolve round personalities and the tactics and stratagems of different groups for gaining mastery over the Party machine. The extent of this occurrence is a measure of the extent the Party has yet to progress in the formulation of specific policies and the present lag in the education of Congressmen in the tasks facing the organisation as the trustees of the Indian revolution.

The Kamaraj Plan was a dramatic gesture on the part of the Leader to refashion the power-structure of the Party and to chasten its ideological image. Unfortunately, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru did not live long enough after this nor was he in the best of health during the short time that the experiment progressed during his life-time.

The Indian revolution is now in its constructive phase. The tasks that it faces are too gigantic and momentous to be accomplished merely in terms of an administrative undertaking. One of the main reasons why over the last eighteen years our efforts have not met with all the success that they merited is this: The administrative plane has not been sufficiently underpinned by the more pervading, more elastic, more efficacious non-official participation and leadership which should have partnered it. For such enthusiastic public response, the lead must come from large, well-disciplined and well-trained party cadres.

It is true that these weaknesses of party organisation are shared by the Congress Party with the other Indian political parties as well. However, the Congress Party as the party in charge of the Indian revolution has a special role to play. While the role of other parties is the negative role of criticism and monitorship from the wings, the Congress Party has to perform at the centre of the Indian stage.

Let us consider, for a parallel, the tasks undertaken after the Russian Revolution by the Communist Party in Soviet Russia. In spite of a totally regimented society and the readiness to resort to force and violence, the Communist rulers could accomplish their revolution only by calling to the aid of the formal organs of State, large masses of party cadres working devotedly day in and day out. The organisational set-up that we would need within the framework of a free society will have to be at least as competent and dedicated as they had.

In all our programmes of national re-construction we need the sustenance, support and drive of such non-official effort. Take, for instance, the agricultural production. The increased production has to be achieved in a farm economy spread out over 70 million households. A vast number of specific measures embracing the supply of diverse inputs and extension services have to be organised. All this entails an enormous organisational effort. Obviously it cannot succeed merely as an administrative undertaking unless it is supported by a gigantic volume of non-official effort for spreading skills and comprehensions and generating enthusiasm amongst the beneficiaries of the programmes.

Whether it is the cooperative movement or the field of education or the field of industrial relations or the uplift of the Harijans or family planning, the vast transformations that we seek cannot be brought about merely by the bread-and-butter ministrations of a mercenary staff. The undertakings must be guided, led and supported by a vast army of selfless non-official workers.

One of the monumental services of Gandhiji to the freedom movement was that during his stewardship of the Congress, a vast number of constructive workers were recruited to various fields in the national cause. In Ashrams, in Rashtriya schools, in Harijan Sevak centres, in khaddar and village industries, in the propagation of Hindi, Gandhiji engaged large numbers of men and women, some of them part-time, others occasional and yet others whole-time and life-long. All were dedicated broadly to the Congress ideology, each specialising in the particular facet of it. It was this spirit of dedication and selfless

service which lent to the movement its outstanding prestige. Unless this spirit is recaptured, we cannot have the ballast of moral leadership without which the Party cannot fulfil its revolutionary role.

The organisational requirements of today are different from those in the days of the freedom struggle. Today's objectives are more sophisticated, the programmes of constructive work more complex and skilled although unsensational. The Congress is not merely a movement today but a political party with a creed and a programme to enact. Large and dedicated bodies of Congressmen must be trained and prepared in new skills and techniques. Training programmes, seminars, syndicates, lectures, indoctrination courses, must be organised and a wide variety of literature produced for implanting these skills and comprehensions into the minds of Congressmen. With such support, determined political leadership in the administration will be able to transmute the Congress philosophy of national re-construction into the rapid betterment of the Indian masses.

In Indian conditions with a multiple party system in which one political party continues to be by far the most dominant and numerous element, it is imperative to devise safeguards and working arrangements to preserve and cherish the democratic form of Government. We must evolve for ourselves the way of working a one-party democracy until a bi-party system develops. In the absence of such adjustments made for the purpose, it is inevitable that feelings of frustration, cynicism and even irresponsibility would be generated on the one hand and of smugness, complacency and 'injured innocence' on the other.

I believe it is necessary to make several adaptations to the arrangements and procedures relating to the functioning of Parliament in order that the Administration functions purposefully in the light of an informed and articulated Parliamentary opinion and its invigilation. Parliament has emerged recently as a very powerful entity on the political scene. It is necessary to ensure that its interests and energies are focussed into fruitful and constructive directions and not lost in endless disputes of litigious or procedural character. Once the machinery of

an Ombudsman or Lokpal as a means is at hand for verifying the bona fides of administrative action, the credibility of the public administration should be restored and motivation for a merely litigious or procedural disputation in the legislature should have disappeared.

The details would need to be carefully worked out but there would seem to be need for a great deal more of systematic setting up of parliamentary committees in different sectors of public policy and administration so that the formulation and implementation of policies may be done in greater understanding with and in the light of well-informed and well-focussed parliamentary opinion. We have to adapt the working of parliamentary democracy to our special requirements if it is to survive the strains of our conditions and eventually to succeed. The British prototype, while useful as a general guide-line, may need considerable modification in detail to meet our particular circumstances.

We must have the courage and ingenuity to graft on the main corpus of the Parliamentary tradition, institutional arrangements that will adapt it in its detailed working to our specific needs and challenges while preserving inviolate the spirit of parliamentary democracy. These needs had been submerged and obliterated under the tidal swell of post-independence years and the providential dispensation of an overwhelming and universally respected personality like Jawaharlal Nehru at the helm of the State. As the tide has receded, the rocks are being exposed and we must reckon with them in steering the ship of State.

May be it may be given to us to make such adaptations successfully and while departing from some letter of the 'book of words' show the way of working parliamentary democracy in the spirit for our own advantage and as a possible example to other newly emerging countries.

VIII

WHY CONGRESS?

We have seen what a wide variety and range of problems we face on the national scene at the current moment.

The difficulty of the situation is accentuated by the fact that we have no longer the benefit of the kind of widely accepted national leadership which Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru furnished over the first seventeen years of freedom to this country.

It was providential that during its formative years the newly born Indian nation was blessed with such outstanding leadership. Indeed, over the last sixty or seventy years the country has produced leaders of a quality that would do proud any country in the world at any time in its history. Ranade, Gokhale, Tilak, Motilal Nehru, Malaviya, Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Patel, Jawaharlal Nehru — this is a gallery of national portraits comparable to any age anywhere in the world. I have no doubt that the country will continue to produce a line of leadership in keeping with this tradition. However, there is no law of nature or special dispensation of a kindly Providence whereby in succession to Jawaharlal Nehru we should have ready at hand another monumental leader of like calibre and acceptability.

Indeed, it would seem that the age of the superlative giants in Indian politics is gone for good and that hereafter we can only have, what may be called without offence, a 'bread-and-butter' leadership. Not merely that. Hereafter no lone towering national hero will bestride like a historical colossus the life of this sub-continent. The leadership will be federal and collective, of commonplace mortals not infallible angels.

This is not because the quality of the present generation or that of the succeeding generations, intrinsically, in point of capacity or of courage, or personal excellence, is or would be

any less than that of the generation gone by. This is simply because in a conjuncture wherein the task to be done is the unsensational, unspectacular, necessarily contentious work-a-day transaction of innumerable governmental and organisational chores, there is no room for the emergency of overwhelming popularities or outstanding reputations such as of a Gandhi, a Tilak or a Jawaharlal Nehru. The conditions are wholly different during a political struggle for independence. The qualities then called forth are those of superlative courage and sacrifice; there are no problems calling for a delicate balancing of hard options desiderata, no choices which must necessarily be unsatisfactory to particular groups or interests, no strict measuring-rods of results and performance. The agitational activities of a freedom struggle call forth and develop different qualities of mind and different skills from those required for the successful functioning of political organisation in the rank and file of leadership, just as much as at the apex of the pyramid. During the struggle for political independence, persons of such manifest and monumental fearlessness, integrity and unselfishness as Tilak or Gandhi or Pandit Nehru were divinities incarnate and could do no wrong in the eyes of the public; the matter is, however, very different when you come to the brass tacks of day-to-day contact in the political and economic organisation of the country, with the immense range of hard choices, disputable issues and balanced priorities relevant to such a job.

Democracy is on trial in India. If we have imbibed the teachings of these illustrious sons of India aforementioned, we should be able to manage our affairs *even in the absence of* leadership cast in a like heroic mould. It is a challenge to the political maturity and good sense of the Indian people to build up a collective leadership out of available material in the current absence of a personality of such outstanding qualities and renown. I have no doubt that the challenge will be successfully met.

If this challenge is to be met and if the country is to surmount

the stupendous difficulties and trials ahead of it, is there any other political Party which holds out even remotely a promise of success than the Congress Party?

In the days of Jawaharlal Nehru the country voted Congress because of Nehru. Today the compulsions of the situation are such that it is all the more necessary for the country to vote Congress if the nation is to march further on the path blazed by Jawaharlal Nehru.

Complacency and self-satisfaction are bad but so is unmerited self-denigration and flagellation. Some people in our country seem to derive a morbid delight out of disparaging indiscriminately all Indian achievements. Indian planning has failed; Indian politicians are corrupt and venal; Indian industries are shoddy; Indian businessmen are cheats and swindlers; Indian scientists are a fraud; Indian intellectuals are self-centred opportunists! It is difficult to appreciate what pleasure is derived by such self-pejoration. Such critics are really pathological cases. I suppose Freud would have a name for them.

Apart from such extreme cases, it has to be confessed that we are suffering generally now from a crisis of confidence. There is really no warrant for this. Notwithstanding the recent setbacks and strokes of bad luck like two successive famine years, we have a record of which we have good reason to be proud. We have established and successfully worked a modern parliamentary democracy as if we were to the manner born and schooled through the experience of several decades. We have been strenuously restructuring our economy over fifteen years of planned endeavour. We have come a long hard way and are now on the verge of a break-through in industrial self-reliance and, hopefully, also agricultural. We have a well-found, well-tried administrative apparatus which can readily be improved and vitalised to meet the challenges of our situation. We have a vigorous and enterprising business community and have developed over the years a substantial pool of scientific and technological talent of great promise.

We have good reason to entertain a measure of confidence and self-assurance. If we cherish faith in ourselves and pride in our heritage and capabilities, no power on earth can prevent

us acquiring the status and position that belong to our size and our importance in the family of nations.

To the women of India in particular the appeal of the Congress Party is specially irresistible. It is the Congress movement that has enfranchised women as full and equal partners in the public life of the country. "India in every generation" says Radhakrishnan "has produced millions of women who have never found fame, but whose daily existence has helped to civilize the race. Their warmth of heart, self-sacrificing zeal, loyalty, strength and suffering are among the glories of this ancient race." It is the women who have preserved the family pieties, the religious and cultural traditions, the good sense, goodwill and tolerance that have been the hall-mark of Indian civic life through the ages. In the confrontation with the West over the last two centuries it is the women-folk who have held fast to the distinct Indian way of life and culture. They have a big role to play in the fashioning of a new India as a synthesis of modern technology and our immemorial ethical values. It is the Congress ideology that holds the best promise of fulfilment to the ideals and aspirations of modern Indian womanhood.

The successful working of a democracy is facilitated by the existence of an alternative party system whereunder the electorate has the choice to choose one political party or another for the running of the Government. It will be a vindication of the principles that the Congress has always stood for and a proud day for the Congressmen when such a situation emerges on the Indian political scene. As of today, however, there is no feasible alternative to the Congress Party. No other political party, nor any conceivable combination of political parties, is capable of furnishing an alternative to hold the country together or to run its Government. No political Party commands anything like the widespread trust and confidence over the length and breadth of the country, in cities and the countryside, among the rich and the poor, among the educated and the illiterate, amidst the workers and the employers, that the Congress Party still enjoys.

In the great debate that precedes the elections in India, while it has doubtless other advantages, the Congress Party suffers from some serious handicaps. It is the only Party which has to talk on the basis of actual performance. To govern is to choose. And in most cases in the Indian economic scene there are no soft options. The choices have to be hard, sometimes even ruthless. It is inevitable that some interests should be disappointed, some claims to priority deferred, some hopes belied, some selectivity exercised in the deployment of limited resources. All these create lumps of dissatisfaction in the body politic. Besides, the Congress cannot make wild electoral promises. Even the Opposition Parties, on their own reckoning, do not expect to unseat the Congress in national office. They can, therefore, merrily promise — unlike the Congress — everything to everybody knowing that there is no hope or fear of their being called upon to fulfil their promises. It is always easy besides to attack any proposal when you have no responsibility for furnishing a feasible superior alternative.

Thus, the Opposition Parties can talk in the same breath of decentralisation of power to the lowest levels and the declaration of India as a unitary State to be ruled from Delhi presumably with a couple of hundred Commissioners after the State Governments and Legislatures are abolished. They talk of large benefits to the masses in terms of guaranteed employment, free education and medical services, while at the same time they abjure additional tax-effort — oh no! They will provide cheap food to the urban consumers while they will at the same time pay higher prices to the producers in the rural areas and subsidise the difference presumably without levying taxes. Irrigation projects will be completed fast and furious but there will be no betterment levies or irrigation cess. They will build up our defences against both our hostile neighbours all along the frontier and even explode a nuclear device but they will at the same time cut down drastically our non-plan expenditure of which Defence outlay is such a large chunk. They will adopt up-to-date technology without collaboration from foreigners, enlarge welfare outlays without causing inflation, protect tenants without hurting land-owners, improve

wage-rates without diminishing the share of capital and enterprise, pay the poor without robbing the rich!

But the Indian voters have shown themselves to be possessed of an adult and mature judgment. Negative politics can never win their wide support and rightly so.

Elections are to be decided on the long haul. A temporary economic set-back or food shortage caused by a failure of the monsoon must be judged in its correct perspective. The Indian voter has the necessary stability and judgment to assess, with reference to the five-year time horizon, what policies will benefit the country and, whatever the shouting, who will deliver the goods.

Electoral arrangements embracing widely diverse elements like the Muslim League and the Left Communists alongside of the Jan Sangh and the Swatantra are political marriages of convenience. The Indian voter knows that whatever their value as electoral tactics, such union can never furnish the base for a constructive long-term address to the problems of the country.

Four or five lame persons binding together can only stumble forth as in a three-legged race. They are no match for a healthy person walking on his own two legs!

The country has resolved upon attaining its salvation through democratic processes. The mills of democracy grind slowly although they grind fine and true. The people are, however, impatient for progress, having suffered long, and unless the rate of progress is sufficiently rapid, we might tire out their patience and exhaust their good-will. There is the alluring spectacle in other parts of the world where, reportedly many 'leaps' have been taken in redeeming the masses from their age-old problems of poverty and want.

The grace, decorum, courtesy of debate and the dignity of the Legislative Chamber are an indispensable ingredient for the successful functioning of parliamentary democracy. Today the ballot-box is open to any party to win its way to the seat of authority. There can be no excuse or extenuation, therefore, for any behaviour which would derogate from the dignity and prestige of the popular assemblies. Indeed, the efficacy and

status of popular assemblies are the best safeguard available for the legitimate political ambitions of the Opposition Parties themselves.

Attempts to discredit the government are legitimate opposition tactics. Attempts to discredit the permanent political institutions in the country are, however, an unpardonable treason against the foundations of freedom itself. If democratic processes are discredited, pressures may get built up for a resort to undemocratic channels and to methods of violence and expropriation instead of orderly and constitutional progress.

Should that happen, much that many of us cherish in the culture of India and its arts of civilization might have been lost. More than that, history has repeatedly demonstrated that violent revolutions have a habit of miscarrying. Should that transpire, we might have paid for our tardy progress by constitutional means, the supreme forfeit of losing for ever the opportunity for conscious self-determination by the people at large, so soon after they had entered upon their estate.

There has been much talk lately of corruption and misdemeanour at the level of Ministers of Government. I yield to none in my insistence on the purity of public administration, more especially at the high political levels which set the tone of the entire machinery of administration. It is evident enough that some of this criticism has been well-merited. Nor has the Government been impervious to these charges. At least half a dozen enquiries and investigations have been ordered in the last two and a half years since the passing away of Jawaharlal Nehru, involving Cabinet Ministers, Chief Ministers and high personages. Many political heads have rolled consequent to the disclosure of improprieties established by these investigations.

While purity in public life is important, so is a measure of dignity, regard and deference to constituted authority. While misconduct should certainly be exposed, irresponsible inudslinging and reckless character-baiting are nothing but a vandalism against public morale. The public have now been so worked up by stories of corruption, real and fancied, that they always tend to believe the worst, once it is uttered. What is

at stake in this odious situation is not merely a handful of ministerial reputations but the very foundation of faith in public life which is being subverted by such irresponsible nihilism.

The remedy for such a situation would not lie in ordering merely *ad hoc* investigations as charges are flung but in creating an institutional mechanism which will sift the true from the false and bring the delinquent to book without sensation or fanfare. The Administrative Reforms Commission's recommendations about creating the office of a 'Lokpal' is designed to serve this purpose admirably. It should help secure asepsis in public life and put an end to the degrading and coarsening spectacle of open charge and slander of high public authorities.

The Congress seeks a fresh national mandate from the country not only because it has been for seventy unbroken years the authentic voice of Indian urges and aspirations:

The Congress seeks a fresh national mandate from the country not only because it has brought independence to the country after a resounding freedom struggle over two generations:

The Congress seeks a fresh national mandate from the country not only because it has led the country successfully for twenty years in the postwar period through a tangled host of difficulties and tribulations:

The Congress seeks a fresh national mandate from the country not merely on the basis of its record of achievements during this period:

The Congress seeks a fresh national mandate from the country because *it is the only political force* capable of running the country at all and still more so of carrying it further forward in the direction of democracy, unity and socialism.

There are all manner of problems that the country has to tackle in the years ahead. There is the problem of food, the problem of building up a self-reliant economy, the problem of defence, of our relationship with the rest of the world. Intern-

ally there is the problem of relationship between the Union and the States, the problem of curbing concentration of economic power and bringing a measure of light and relief into the lives of tens of millions of the poor and distressed in our community.

These problems can be vigorously tackled only by a government drawing its sustenance from the tap-roots of an abundant support in the country. A government operating on the narrow base of a marginal or modest majority in the legislature cannot put through the bold programme of radical reform in many spheres that the country needs. Without sufficient power and punch to back it up the Government will not be able to bulldoze through the thickets of vested interest, administrative procrastination, regional pressures that beset all major issues of policy in our country. The only party which has conceivably the potentiality to put such a government in office is the Congress party.

I ask for a vote for the Congress party first to make government possible at all. I ask for an overwhelming vote so that that government may have the strength to become a 'good government' which could carry the Indian revolution forward to its fulfilment.

We have witnessed over the last few months how fragile the framework of parliamentary democracy is still with us. We have seen how diminution of authority quickly brings up elements of irresponsibility, lawlessness and disorder always lurking just below the surface. There are a hundred plausible grievances in the country which can erupt and break out at any time into orgies of lawlessness and violence instead of waiting in the long queue for the patient solution of these huddles and tangles one by one. In a situation like this, obviously the country's best hopes lie in return to power of a political force which has the potentiality of furnishing the stability, strength and capacity to cope with these challenges on the one hand while working to resolve these formidable problems permanently on the other.

This is not to say that the Congress Party or its administrations have been faultless in the past. I have myself indicated at a number of places, both here and elsewhere, the deficiencies of performance of both the Party and the Government. I sincerely commend the Congress Party to the Indian citizens in the forthcoming elections not because it is without deficiency or blemish but because it has the potentiality of overcoming these infirmities and, in any case, it is the only political element which can furnish a stable Government to the country, without which not only no progress but even orderly existence is not possible.

Why Communists ?

by S. G. Sardesai

INTRODUCTORY

The Communist Party of India approaches the coming general elections on the basis of its past policies and activities.

Since the achievement of independence in 1947 these policies have been directed towards strengthening India's economic and political independence; broadening and deepening Indian democracy; pursuing a foreign policy of supporting colonial liberation movements and strengthening world peace, thereby investing non-alignment with a positive content; raising popular living standards; and strengthening the forces of secularism and national integration.

According to us, all these objectives are inter-related and inseparable and can be considered as aspects of a single basic policy whose aim is to clear the path for the achievement of socialism in India which is our final goal.

The steadfast pursuit of such a policy demands that one should be clear as to which internal and foreign forces are interested in its success and hence helpful in its execution. It also follows that one has to be clear as to which internal and foreign interests are opposed to it and have, therefore, to be resisted and dislodged.

This question will be concretised, elaborated and illustrated in the course of **this** pamphlet. At the outset, it may be stated that basically it is the Indian working class, the mass of the peasantry, middle class employees and the middle class intelligentsia that stand to gain by this policy and hence participate in its vigorous execution.

The Soviet Union and other socialist countries (though not China in recent years) support it since it corresponds to their national and international interests. The Afro-Asian national liberation movement and many of the newly independent coun-

tries also share the same ideals and are our allies in the struggle for their achievement.

In contrast, the imperialist powers, guided by the aim of colonial exploitation and domination, do everything in their power, including military aggression, to defeat this policy.

Internally, Indian monopoly capitalists, bankers, big landholders and the former princes are opposed to the policy since it obviously conflicts with their narrow, reactionary and profiteering interests. So also are the communal forces in the country. These elements constantly strive to undermine Indian democracy, replace it by a reactionary, dictatorial regime, rely growingly on collaboration with foreign private capital (particularly American) and line up with the Western powers in the sphere of foreign policy.

The common capitalists, by and large, have a vacillating, dual role. On occasions and issues, they support the forces of democracy and economic self-reliance, a peaceful foreign policy and friendly relations with the socialist countries. Often, they support reaction.

It follows that the basic political policy of the Communist Party, in the given conditions, is to unite, organise and activate the classes that stand firmly by democracy, independent economic development and the struggle for raising popular living standards.

It also follows that the Communist Party is firmly opposed to the forces of imperialism, internal monopoly capitalism and landlordism.

We pursue this policy in all and every sphere of our public activity, whether in the field of mass struggles or parliamentary elections. It is the basic guiding line of our parliamentary and extra-parliamentary work.

In terms of political parties, this implies that we endeavour to bring about a united front of left and democratic parties, groups and elements (such as the Marxist Communist Party, the Samyukta Socialist Party, the Republican Party and similar parties and groups in the various States) against the parties of reaction and communalism (such as the Swatantra Party, Jana Sangh, Muslim League and other communal parties and against

the anti-people, capitalistic policies of the ruling party, viz., the Congress.

The Congress, by and large, represents the Indian capitalist class as a whole, though it has still got a considerable mass following because of its role in the freedom movement. Right reactionaries are fast getting hold of the Congress. At the same time, it certainly has progressive elements in its fold, particularly at the lower level.

Our basic policy comes up in opposition to the Congress. If and when the Congress takes a positive, progressive stand on a given issue, we support it.

Our key aim in the coming elections is to break the Congress monopoly of power, strengthen the left and democratic opposition in Parliament and State legislatures, and replace Congress governments in such States as we can by non-Congress governments composed of left and progressive parties and independents.

II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The origin of the Communist Party of India can be traced to the period immediately following the first World War.

Exhausted economically and politically by a grim war extending over four years and covering two continents, imperialism entered its general crisis by the close of the war in 1918.

The Czarist Empire, in fact, collapsed a year earlier. The Russian Revolution, the first successful socialist revolution in history, opened up a new horizon before the toiling people all over the world for the abolition of capitalist and landlord exploitation. By freeing all countries under Czarist rule, it also blazed a new path for subject countries struggling for national independence and self-determination.

The mighty empires of Germany and Austria collapsed. The working class, not only in these countries, but also in France and England, surged forward for the overthrow of capitalism and the achievement of socialism.

The war tremendously weakened and undermined imperialist power in the subject colonial countries all over Asia and Africa. National freedom movements spread like a wildfire from China in the East to Morocco in Africa between 1918 and 1922.

The national upsurge in our own country between 1919 and 1922, often though inadequately referred to as the period of the non-cooperation movement, was part and parcel of this international popular revolt against imperialism and very much linked with it. It is a pity that official historians of the Congress and the Indian national movement either do not realise the full significance of this reality, or underplay it.

Following the War a powerful wave of working class strikes broke out all over India in the textile, railway, plantation

and a number of other industries. Big and stable trade unions were formed for the first time in the country. The All India Trade Union Congress was founded in 1920, presided over by Lala Lajpat Rai.

Workers put forward demands for better conditions of work, a shorter working day and a higher wage or dearness allowance to compensate for the phenomenal rise in prices during the War. It must be noted that the employers had made huge profits in the war taking advantage of the fall in imports and higher prices.

But workers did not stop at demanding higher wages. They were also imbued with the spirit of freedom. In many strikes they demanded the removal of British officers, protested against the bloody repression unleashed against the national movement after the War (e.g. the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre) and often paralysed the transport of British troops in the country by stopping railway trains.

Beginning with the Punjab, the peasantry rose in revolt in U.P., Malabar and other parts of India. Peasant struggles were directed against the landlords and also demanded Swaraj.

And in this entire context, Gandhiji came forward to broaden the Indian National Congress into a mass organisation and to give it a programme of mass actions such as hartals, non-cooperation, boycott of schools and law courts, picketing of liquor and foreign cloth shops, and so on, all centred on the demand for Swaraj.

The Communist Party, whose embryonic beginnings go back to the years between 1920 to 1924 arose in this background and was the product of all the political developments described briefly above.

The very first efforts to form an Indian Communist Party were made by certain Indian revolutionaries who had emigrated from the country to Europe and America a little prior to and during the War. Among them, the most prominent was M. N. Roy. Some among the Muhajareens (Indian Muslims who emigrated into Afghanistan and Central Asia in 1919-20 because they did not want to live under British rule) also joined the effort. However, the attempt was not fruitful.

Actually, it was comrade Dange, Muzaffar Ahmed, Shaukat Usmani, Ghate and some others who first started communist propaganda and organisation in India between 1921 and 1924. The Cawnpore Bolshevik Conspiracy Case was launched in 1924 and formally the Communist Party of India was founded in 1925.

Role of the Party

The dominant ideological and organisational considerations which led these comrades to form the Party can be briefly stated.

They had participated in the national freedom movement led by the National Congress under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi. But the withdrawal of the movement in 1922, just as it was rising to a climax, was a great shock and disappointment for them.

Meanwhile, they had learnt a lot about the Russian Revolution, Lenin and Communism. They realised the significance of the revolution and Lenin's teachings for the Indian working-class and national movements. They had seen in India the power of militant working-class struggles and peasant uprisings.

They correctly concluded that side by side with the Congress it was necessary to organise the Indian working class independently and on the basis of its revolutionary class ideology, viz., Marxism-Leninism. This implied not only the organisation of trade unions and leading the workers in strike actions. It meant, above all, the establishment of the revolutionary political party of the working-class, viz., the Communist Party.

Naturally, the aim of the Party was to participate in the broad national movement organised by the National Congress, while simultaneously radicalising its economic and political aims, e.g., the demand for complete national independence, the abolition of landlordism and distribution of land to the tillers of the soil without compensation, the confiscation and nationalisation of British capital in India, and so on.

Necessarily related to and concomitant with this aim was

the struggle against the compromising (essentially pro-capitalist) policies of the Gandhian leadership, and the task of bringing the working class in alliance with the peasantry to the position of leadership in the national freedom movement.

The organisation of the Communist Party, organising worker-peasant struggles, participation in the broad national movement, radicalising the programme of the National Congress and the forging of working-class leadership in the freedom movement were considered necessary and inter-connected tasks for the achievement of complete national independence from British rule and India's further advance to socialism.

Such were the beginnings and the causes of the formation of the Communist Party.

Between 1925 and the beginning of the second World War the Communist Party expanded in numbers, activity and mass influence.

It would not be true to say that it developed through "mergers". Communists are always opposed to unprincipled and opportunist mergers, without reference to ideology, basic aims and policies. Such mergers are an invitation to factional feuds in a revolutionary party which weaken its striking power at critical, turning points in history, precisely when it has to take quick and correct decisions and move the masses into action with the instrument of a united, disciplined and determined organisation. That is why we do not subscribe to "group" affiliations.

However, this approach has to be understood in its real spirit, and not mechanically.

For it is true that between 1925 and 1936, the various communist groups in Bombay, Bengal, Punjab, Madras etc., were *really* brought together in a single, united, centralised Communist Party. Besides, huge numbers of terrorist revolutionaries (probably the majority of them) in jails and detention camps (the Andamans, Hijli, Behrampur, Buxa, Deoli, etc.) joined the Party, practically *en bloc*. Large numbers from the then Congress Socialist Party also joined us in that period. Indian students studying abroad, most of them in England, formed communist groups and joined the Party on returning home.

It need not be stated that during the same period hundreds of young intellectuals, workers and peasants joined the Party directly after working for some length of time in student and youth organisations, trade unions and Kisan Sabhas. A large number of young women came via the women's movement. The proportion of active women functionaries is always larger in the Communist Party than in other political parties.

The process has not halted after independence. The Left Socialist Group joined the Party in 1952. But in the post-second World War period, the expansion of the Party has resulted predominantly through left political workers coming over to the Party individually.

During its life time of over forty years, here and there, members of the Communist Party have left it. Many of them have become inactive and defunct. A good number continue to remain friendly towards the Party, a few have strayed into undesirable channels.

The Split

But the only split we have had to face was the one in 1964, when the dogmatic, sectarian group in the Party broke away from it and formed, as it now calls itself, the Marxist Communist Party.

There is no denying that this was a major split, not only in terms of numbers (the minority which split away was substantial) but also because, some comrades who had long records of valuable service to the Party and the Indian people were among those who deserted.

It is also a tragic truth that the split has not only harmed the communist movement but the entire left and democratic movement in the country. One of the reasons which have emboldened the reactionary forces in India, in the recent period, to launch a furious offensive against all progressives is the split in our Party and the very inadequate unity of the left and democratic forces, as a whole.

We have done all we can to heal the split. But the task is extremely difficult. The "Marxist Communists" suffer from

all the maladies which Lenin exposed mercilessly in his famous pamphlet "‘Left-wing’ Communism, an Infantile Disorder". In fact, worse, for the malady is no longer infantile, it has become hardened and fossilised, and hence much more difficult to cure.

The crucial tragedy (I am consciously using an inoffensive word) is that in the name of a quicker and faster road to revolution the "Marxist Communists" always concentrate the fire of their attack on their friends and allies instead of the main enemy. To be frank, such an approach and policy play into the hands of the enemy instead of helping to defeat him. The nearer the friend and ally, the greater they consider him to be their enemy. He is considered far more dangerous than the enemy himself.

Revolutionary politics is relentless and inexorable. A revolutionary party loses its balance if, instead of seeking allies who may not accept all its views but are prepared to join hands with it against the reactionary enemy, it treats such allies as enemies. Both logically and practically, this leads in the direction of the theory of the enemy of the enemy being one's friend.

China could not possibly have a closer and more reliable friend in the world than the Soviet Union. Neither can it have a worse enemy than U.S. imperialism. And yet, because of certain differences which, in their earlier phase, could have been settled across the table in a friendly way, it started treating the Soviet Union as its enemy while formally shouting itself hoarse against U.S. imperialism as the main enemy.

No wonder that whether in Vietnam or world politics Chinese policy is now aiding and abetting (in objective reality, not in theory) American and other imperialist forces against the Soviet Union, against India and other independent countries, and against the international socialist and democratic movements, generally.

The malady of our "Marxist Communists" in India is the same. Judging them by their speeches, writings and practical activities one wonders whether they have any concern for defeating the forces of imperialism, monopoly capital and landlordism in India. If they had, they would not disrupt the unity

of the trade unions and Kisan Sabhas, the working class and the peasant movement, as they have been doing since the split, because of their "zeal" to expose and attack the "revisionism" of the Communist Party of India. In *practice*, therefore, not imperialism, the big capitalists and the landlords become their main enemy, but we, "the revisionist Dange clique". A very strange logic, indeed!

As applied to election strategy, the "Marxist Communists" have declared that the Congress is their main enemy. And yet, in Bengal, in Andhra, and in a number of other States they are disrupting the anti-Congress left and democratic front by demanding a number of constituencies out of all proportion to their real influence and strength.

Any sensible person can see that such a policy actually helps the Congress to win by dividing the votes of the democratic opposition. And yet, the "Marxist Communists" shriek more vociferously against the Congress than any other left party in India.

I may add that among the left parties, again, we, according to the "Marxist Communists", are the worst enemy. It does not matter if the Congress wins (some of them say so openly), but the "revisionist" Communist Party of India must first be defeated, this is their general election policy. Certain exceptions can be cited, but they are the result of the pressure of their own ranks against the leadership, in certain localities and States.

The task of unifying the communist, left and democratic forces in India is an extremely arduous, complicated and protracted process. It calls for immense patience and perseverance.

Our party has striven for such a unification with all the strength and devotion at its command. We shall stick to that course doggedly and tenaciously no matter what difficulties and odds we may have to face. We have no partisan interest in Indian politics beyond the achievement of such unity for which we have made, and shall make, every sacrifice that is called for. We are absolutely convinced that that is the only path which can advance the cause of Indian democracy, the defence

of national independence and socialism. The hope and the future of our country are hinged to its success.

III

DOMESTIC ECONOMIC POLICY

It is better to deal with the question of domestic economic, political and social policies before dealing with matters of foreign policy. It is generally recognised, and correctly so, that the foreign policy of a country emanates from its internal policies, basically, its internal economic policies. In the case of political parties which are not in power, the foreign policy they advocate is also a projection of the internal economic policies advocated by them.

It is surprising that the questionnaire does not even put the question as to how present day India is to advance towards a socialist India, despite the fact that that is the declared goal of our ruling party, that it has been sanctioned by a resolution of Parliament, and that it is also the declared objective of all the left and democratic parties in our country.

The more so, because if the problems of our domestic economic policy are posed by delinking them from the struggle for socialism, they lose any clear focus and cannot be dealt with adequately and coherently. It comes to Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark!

Every political party in India today advocates or opposes this or that economic policy, this or that specific decision in connection with one or another economic problem, on the basis of its attitude (genuine, not nominal) towards socialism and "free enterprise". The more urgent and acute our economic problems become, as is happening with every passing year, the more impossible it becomes, even in the sphere of practice, to bypass the basic question as to whether one stands for socialism or "free enterprise".

There were many who considered this an "abstract", "doc-

trinaire", "ideological" issue ten years ago. Now it just cannot be avoided.

The ruling Congress Party wants to have the best of both the worlds i.e., talking socialism and building capitalism, which by the way, is the scientifically correct word for "free enterprise".

No wonder that those who are serious about socialism have been growingly pushed out of the Congress since independence *pari passu* with the advocates of "free enterprise" being welcomed to its fold. This is not to say that no one in the Congress is sincere about socialism. But their days inside the Congress are numbered.

The basic and most vital problem of India's domestic economic policy must be posed thus: Is the country to proceed along the path of capitalist development, the path of mass misery and crisis, which the ruling party has pursued since independence, or are the forces of democracy and socialism going to compel a reversal of that path and lead the country along the path of socialist development?

That is the crucial issue.

The first and leading question very aptly put at the beginning of this section is how our Party plans to regenerate the country's economy to ensure more food, more employment, a lower cost of living, better housing and more of the basic necessities of life for the vast majority of the people.

I presume the purpose of the question is not to invite different political parties in India to present a cut and dried scheme for securing the objectives mentioned in the question. Nothing is easier than to assume a hypothetical economic background and put forward some "perfect" recipe for the massive production and equitable distribution or the essential requirements of life. But such a "plan" is not worth the paper on which it is written for life, unfortunately, never presents us the hypothetical economic background of our choice.

And surely not the India of 1966. No party in India today, right, left or centrist, can, even if it so desired, write on a clean slate. The slate, as it is, was first taken over by independent India in August 1947, and quite a lot has been written on it

since by the ruling Congress Party, its Five-Year Plans, and their implementation or lack of implementation in practice.

Admittedly, the picture (to change the metaphor) is not only excruciating, it is alarming. A chronic food shortage made worse by drought and the failure of the government to procure internal food stocks from rich peasants, landlords and food traders; shortages of most essential commodities not excluding indispensable edible oils and vegetables; constant vanishing into the black market even of available commodities like kerosene and salt; revolting housing and sanitary conditions in the urban areas; dearth of drinking water in tens of thousands of villages; rampant profiteering and rocketing prices with working-class wages and the salaries of middle class employees always sinking in purchasing power; the closure of factories and growing unemployment in industry and agriculture; run-away inflation and spiralling indirect (commodity) taxation; helpless dependence on foreign aid for capital, capital goods, raw materials, spare parts and food; a fast rising mountain of foreign loans even the interest on which we can no longer pay; a yawning gulf between imports and exports which has become a deep chasm; bankruptcy in the sphere of foreign exchange which has forced us to devalue the rupee—such is the shocking picture of crisis and profound economic insecurity that stares us in the face after twenty years of Congress rule.

Clearly, not even God on earth can bring about a material improvement in such a situation, so to say, by a magician's wand. What can and must be done is to enforce such radical and concrete changes in the economic policies pursued by the rulers since independence as will bring about a turn towards the better and assure reasonably good conditions of life to the common people within a measurable distance of time.

What are these radical and concrete changes? We shall come to them readily. But before doing so it is necessary to diagnose the causes of the disease. In economic as all other ailments it is not prescribing the cure that is the most difficult job. The difficult job is the diagnosis. If the diagnosis is correct, the cure suggests itself. If the diagnosis is wrong, the suggested cure can be worse than the disease.

The Diagnosis

The root cause of the economic crisis and formidable economic difficulties which the country is facing now lies in the fact that our rulers have sought to achieve national economic development through the capitalist development of the economy.

This can be proved in different ways. The simplest proof, of course, is the undeniable fact that the driving force of our economy is the motive of private profit which is the cornerstone of the capitalist system. In fact, as has happened rapidly in India, the profit motive leads rapidly to the emergence of huge, private monopolies in industry, trade and banking which increase normal profits to the far higher level of monopoly profits.

This is clearly borne out by Government's policy in respect of direct and indirect taxation, money supply and credit, i.e., by its fiscal policies in general.

Government spokesmen express their "profound anxiety" over the fast growing money supply and credit expansion in the country, over deficit financing and inflation, *ad nauseum*. The first thing that the Planning and Finance Ministers do every morning is to repeat their sacred vow to deal drastically with the Mahishasur of inflation and rocketing prices.

But in the same breath they also declare that rising prices are necessary for and inseparable from a developing economy. They assert that it is necessary for private industry and trade to make "reasonable" profits (what is the "reasonable" level?) for giving "an incentive to capital formation and investment." Innumerable tax concessions are repeatedly given to the corporate sector "for stimulating greater savings and investment", for overcoming the "sluggishness" of the capital market.

At the other end it is the working-class and private and government middle class employees that are constantly pressurised to accept a wage-freeze, for they, of course, need no incentive! If and when they are granted a paltry dearness allowance to compensate partially for the rising cost of living, it is only after they undergo the hardships and sufferings involved in strikes, not to speak of repression and victimisation.

To proceed further. It is the workers and the common people who are constantly subjected to increasing commodity taxation, mainly in the form of the sales tax and excise duties. In fact, worse. For in addition they are harangued that it is necessary to reduce their demand for essential commodities for the noble cause of stabilising prices, of holding the price line.

The simple and undeniable meaning of such a policy is that there should be a constantly growing gap between wages and low salaries on one side, and rising prices on the other, so as to increase capitalist profits.

The proof of the pudding is in the eating. The net worth of joint stock companies in India which stood at Rs. 500 crores in 1950-51 rose to Rs. 1,497 crores in 1963-64.

In the same period, joint stock profits before tax rose from Rs. 64 crores to Rs. 286 crores. Their ratio to net worth increased from 12.7 per cent to 19.1 per cent.

The money barons in India are constantly weeping and wailing that personal and corporate taxation has sucked them dry. One would think they have been reduced to paupers and it is necessary to raise a relief fund for their families!

But in the same period referred to above profits of joint stock companies *after tax* rose from Rs. 39 crores to Rs. 139 crores. And their ratio to net worth increased from 7.7 per cent to 9.3 per cent. The picture is clear and unambiguous.

Between 1950-51 to 1965-66 taxes on personal income and expenditure (including corporate taxes) increased from Rs. 126 crores to Rs. 467 crores. In the same period Union excise duties shot up from 68 crores to 861 crores and the total revenue of the States from sales taxes rose from 149 to 792 crores.

It is plain as daylight that for the Government of India the word "incentive" means incentive for private profit-making and none at all to the workers and the common people, who are constantly admonished to tighten their belts, work harder and increase production "for their country and for patriotism."

The figures given above, of course, exclude profits made in the black market and through the evasion of taxes by the tycoons, which even by conservative official estimates, run into thousands of crores of rupees.

If this is the road to socialism what is the path of capitalist development called?

All economists in India, barring the utter apologists of official economic policy or the spokesmen of big business, have pointed out that the Government has consistently pursued a fiscal and monetary policy of deficit financing and inflation; of increasing indirect taxes while giving tax concessions to the private sector; of advancing massive loans to industrialists from the state treasury and state financial institutions. Further, the industrialists and traders have been provided with a protected internal market that they could not even dream of under British rule.

All these are universally recognised as powerful weapons of stimulating capitalist and monopoly development.

Capitalist development inevitably leads to the emergence of monopoly capital which, too, is happening in our country.

According to the Monopolies Inquiry Commission's Report (1965) the biggest seventy-five industrial houses in India owned the majority of shares or otherwise dominated 1,536 joint stock companies with a total paid up capital of Rs. 646 crores and assets worth Rs. 2,606 crores. This excludes joint stock banks most of which are also dominated by one or the other of these very plutocrats.

Of these, the Tatas and Birlas alone lead with 204 joint stock companies, a paid up capital of Rs. 179 crores, assets of Rs. 710 crores, and an annual turnover of Rs. 615 crores. (Incidentally, even if a bare six per cent of the turnover is taken as profit this gives an annual profit of Rs. 37 crores! What a wonderful socialist pattern!)

The portion of the paid up capital of the above mentioned seventy-five giants to the paid up capital of all joint stock companies in India (excluding Government and banking companies) works out at 44 per cent, and of their assets to the assets of all the companies at 47 per cent.

The Monopolies Commission also worked out the growth of product-wise concentration in India. For this it selected one hundred representative products of all types of industries such

as engineering, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, household goods, clothing and so on.

In 65 of these hundred products three top producers alone shared over 75 per cent of the total production. In the case of another 10 products three top producers shared between 60 to 75 per cent of the production.

In the sphere of banking six Indian monopoly houses dominate our private banks with a capital investment of Rs. 40 crores and a control over public deposits running into Rs. 2,500 crores. It is an accepted fact that these vast amounts are used mainly for financing the trade and industry of big business in India.

All this is apart from public sector financial concerns like the State Bank of India, the Central and State Finance Corporations, the Industrial Development and Finance Corporation, the Life Insurance Corporation, and so on who are always at the service of our big traders and industrial magnates.

We have referred till now to private industry, trade and credit.

In the sphere of agriculture also Congress land reforms have not transferred land from the old semi-feudal, rent receiving, absentee landlords to the actual tillers of the soil.

To the extent that land ownership has changed, the old landlords are being replaced by a new type of big landholder and rich peasant trying to go over to capitalist farming. All official efforts are directed precisely towards buttressing and strengthening this type of landholder in the countryside.

This is done by the introduction of commercial crops in the place of food crops, expansion of irrigation, the introduction of oil engines and pumps, better seeds, fertilisers, insecticides and the advance of cooperative credit overwhelmingly to the upper strata of the peasantry. The Community Development projects are also an instrument of this policy.

Of course this does not mean that Indian agriculture does not need more fertilisers, irrigation and so on. We need them on a far bigger scale than what has been made available. At the moment we are referring to the class purpose of official agrarian policies.

Considering the agrarian problem handed down to us by the

Britishers, i.e., specifically in our rural conditions, the result of Congress policies is a hodge-podge, where plenty of legal and illegal rack-renting still continues and the new landholder exploits the rural poor as a landlord, employer and moneylender, all rolled into one.

This is not difficult to see. Despite land reforms, five per cent of the rural households owned forty per cent of the land as recently as 1959-60. The ceiling on landholding has remained on paper.

Besides, both the old and new landlords have evicted literally millions of tenants from the land in the name of self-cultivation, thereby adding to the army of unemployed and seasonally employed poor peasants and landless labourers.

Apart from this, Congress land reforms were brought about by paying the old, semi-feudal landlords a compensation of Rs. 641 crores which is, of course, realised from the peasantry through increased land revenue and other levies. The salaries and allowances of the princes also continue, in addition to hundreds of crores of private property left with them at the time of the "abolition" of princely rule.

The development of capitalism in India has, thus, not taken place on the basis of a thorough abolition of feudalism, as in France and England. Indian capitalism makes very serious compromises with, and gives substantial concessions to Indian feudal elements.

The matter does not end here. In fact, the most dangerous aspect, by far, of the government's capitalist economic policies is the grave and growing concessions made to foreign private capital (imperialist capital) which have now practically mortgaged our entire national economy to the Western powers, mainly the U.S.A.

The Congress Government did not take over British concerns in India after the achievement of independence, as it could, very legitimately, have done. For these concerns had been built on capital and profits systematically plundered from India since the days of the East India Company. Indeed, the Government went further. Four hundred million pounds of our

sterling balances were simply gifted away to England in return for old military stores and installations.

In subsequent years, first in the name of the need for capital goods and not discriminating against foreign capital, and recently, in the name of saving foreign exchange, the Government of India has opened the doors of the country wider and wider for the import of foreign private capital.

Non-banking foreign private investments in India grew from Rs. 256 crores in 1948 to Rs. 800 crores in 1965.

In 1948, there were only 75 collaboration agreements between Indian big businessmen and foreign monopolists. In 1962, the number rose to over 2000.

Twenty-seven per cent of the share capital of joint stock companies incorporated in India is now foreign. This is the declared portion. The concealed portion is not known.

A good part of the foreign shareholding is pure investment with no contribution to technique or know-how. In many cases the Indian collaborator is compelled to purchase foreign components which can be manufactured in this country.

Profits of foreign-controlled Indian companies are consistently higher than those of indigenous companies.

Such is the position of foreign private capital in India imported independently or in collaboration with Indian big business. Of course, the collaboration deals are predominantly with Indian industrial magnates described above.

The position with regard to the Indian Government's dependence on foreign private capital is no less serious.

After independence, we had a negligible foreign debt of Rs. 32 crores. Early in 1966 it shot up to Rs. 2629 crores, most of the rise having taken place in the third Five Year Plan. The "master stroke" of devaluation has raised it to over Rs. 4100 crores!!

We owe ninety per cent of our foreign debt to the Western powers, again, in the main, to the U.S.A.

It may be asked, what does it matter whether the rulers build capitalism or socialism in India if they develop the national economy, increase employment and national production

and raise popular living standards? But do they? That is just the rub.

Industrial and agricultural production has increased in India since independence. This is not denied, though it is not necessarily to reproduce the relevant figures here since one gets them daily from the All-India Radio and the monopoly owned press in India. Further, if the Congress leaders want to take credit for such performance, one need not grudge it.

But the most pertinent aspect of the question is that the policies of the Government have led to a blind alley in our economy, particularly since the middle of the third Five Year Plan. Industry, agriculture and the economy as a whole, have not only reached a state of chronic stagnation but an all-pervasive crisis.

The main features of this crisis have been mentioned earlier in this section. It is enough if some concrete, glaring facts are stated here.

The growing pauperisation of common working people in town and country, both of manual and intellectual workers, particularly since the last three years, is too patent to need statistical evidence.

However, even by official reports, the real wages of workers which took twelve years after independence to reach the pre-war level, have again sunk below that level during the last three years.

During the third Plan period, unemployment increased from eight to twelve millions. Consumer prices rose by nearly 50 per cent in the last two years alone, twice as fast as between 1951 and 1961. Food production stagnated around eighty million tons annually. Per capita national income declined. The rate of advance of industrial production also declined, many industrial units having drastically to reduce their production or to close down.

Food imports continued to grow. From an annual average of three to four million tons during the second Plan they rose to six million tons, then seven, and in 1966, to the staggering figure of twelve million tons! Food imports alone have cost us Rs. 1500 crores since independence.

The adverse balance of our foreign trade increased from

Rs. 237 crores in 1951-52 to Rs. 575 crores in 1965, the highest on record .

Deficit financing, the root cause of inflation and rising prices, also reached an all-time high of Rs. 400 crores in 1965-66.

And now we are confronted with the mortal blow of the deepening crisis, viz., devaluation, which is nothing less than a daylight slaughter of our standard of value.

Such is the balance sheet of twenty years of capitalist development in the country, the picture of a stark failure whether from the criterion of increasing national production or of raising the living standards of the great mass of the people. It is a picture of national bankruptcy verging on ruin.

This narration of the various features of our national economy as it has developed under Congress rule as also the diagnosis of the causes that have landed us into our present unenviable position, has become rather longish.

But it was necessary for arriving at and suggesting the cure that is needed. It was also necessary for dealing with certain questions which are persistently raised by the champions of "free enterprise", i.e. the opponents of the path of socialist advance.

"Pragmatism"

For instance, it is said that the measures proposed by those who want to advance towards socialism may be idealistic, but they are not "pragmatic". They are "ideological". It is also asked, "How and from where are we to secure capital resources if we go the socialist way?" Again, "Equitable distribution is all right as a goal, but *first* there must be production. The socialists want equal distribution of poverty, not of affluence." Many such arguments are constantly advanced, of which we get a plethora, not only in the speeches of successive presidents of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry and Mr. Minoo Masani, but also of Mr. S. K. Patil and many Congress leaders.

That the Communist Party stands for the social ownership, control and management of the means of production and distri-

bution is too well known to need elaborate treatment. At the moment, considering the existing correlation of forces in the country, we are concerned with the election programme of our Party, i.e., the immediate measures we propose for taking the country a step forward towards the final goal of socialism.

Before coming to the details of such a programme, it is necessary to state that it is utterly incorrect, whether in the realm of theory or practice, to make a dichotomy or trichotomy of the problems of raising capital resources for planned economic development, increasing national production and raising the living standards of the people.

Driven to a corner, advocates of "free enterprise" grant that socialistically oriented economic measures may bring about a faster rate of economic growth. But then, they say that such measures involve more suffering and sacrifices on the part of the present generation.

When it is pointed out to them that it is difficult to imagine greater misery and suffering than what have been imposed on our people as a result of capitalist development, they change their tune and say, "May be, but socialism involves the loss of democracy, it involves regimentation, while we stand for individual liberty."

We will throw light on how much and what kind of "democracy and freedom" our people are enjoying today when we deal with the question of domestic political policies.

Meanwhile, as for regimentation, literally hundreds upon hundreds of Indians, only a minority of whom have been communists, have visited the Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries in the last decade. Almost overwhelmingly they have been impressed by the universal enthusiasm and fervour they witnessed in these countries for increasing national production. "Build, build, build,—build factories, build farms, build houses, build scientific institutions, build schools and colleges, build clubs, theatres, libraries and parks," such is the raging mass passion in the socialist countries.

When and where in human history has slave labour, regimented labour, displayed such a joyous pleasure and enthusiasm for productive labour? But, of course, "whoever says so has

been duped by cunning communist window dressing, whoever shouts about regimentation is an independent, free, objective judge," a la the Times of India, the Hindustan Times, the Indian Express, and, of course, Mr. Minoo Masani, who has "reconsidered" his socialism.

The economic alternatives before our country today are not a slow economic growth combined with individual freedom and rising living standards *or* a fast growth combined with slavery and mass misery.

The alternatives are a slow economic growth combined with a chronic economic crisis, increasing polarisation of wealth and poverty, sweated labour and the growing suppression of freedom and democracy, *or* a rapid economic growth freed from the nightmare of crisis and insecurity, rising standards of life and culture, and genuine freedom and democracy for the common people, i.e. India, i.e. Bharat.

Increasing production is undoubtedly the pre-condition for increasing mass consumption (any fool can see that) but simultaneously increasing mass consumption is *equally indispensable* for creating a rapidly growing market for industry, for keeping the wheels of industry moving and, *what is vital*, for generating the necessary passion among crores and crores of people for going hammer and tongs at the task of working harder and producing more.

That is why, as we have stated, far from there being any contradiction between the obvious tasks of raising capital resources, increasing production and raising popular living standards, either all the three hang together, or they hang separately.

Capital resources

One more clarification is still needed before we come to our Party's concrete proposals.

Even people who ought to know better often raise the question of capital resources as though it is a question of discovering some hidden treasure of hundreds of crores of rupees, i.e., capital which is not already there, already available for our planning and development.

To say the least, this is an extremely amateurish and naive understanding of the problem. Lenin, the greatest of all revolutionaries and the exemplary pupil of Karl Marx, did not discover, and did not attempt to discover, any such *new* capital in Russia after the Bolsheviks came to power.

What he did was to so use and employ the capital resources available to his capitalist predecessors, so manage and organise the entire national economy, that the available capital resources became far more productive than under capitalism.

Capitalism not only means exploitation. Capitalism inevitably means utter anarchy in production and distribution, a criminal waste of colossal national resources in speculation, extravagance, luxury, swindling, corruption, a bloated bureaucracy, and what not, ending up in crisis and the wheels of industry grinding down to a halt.

We in India are shedding hot tears for capital, more capital and still more capital. We have, for quite some time now, bid good bye to elementary national self-respect and pride and have earned the disgraceful reputation of being the biggest beggars in the world. There is hardly a tiny country in Europe to which we do not send missions imploring it for aid.

And yet, how many of us know that in 1965-66 only five out of the aggregate of thirty-two industries in our country recorded full utilisation of their production capacity? As many as thirteen industries worked between 50 to 80 per cent of their capacity, a good many of them below 60 per cent. The production of light industry, i.e., in the main, consumer goods industries, was even below 50 per cent of capacity! Certain vital industries lagged still further behind with a percentage below 30.

The question of capital resources, therefore, is not one of producing rabbits out of the hat. It is fundamentally, *and concretely* (let the champions of "pragmatism" understand) a question of whether our capital resources are going to be used for the people and by the people, or whether they will continue to be used for private profit bringing in its train unemployment, rising prices, pauperisation and crisis.

It may sound paradoxical but is true that capitalism, in its

mad hunt for profits, kills the very goose that lays the golden eggs, viz., capital.

It follows from the treatment of the subject in this section that our proposals for the regeneration of our national economy and for raising popular living standards aim at a persistent weakening of the position of foreign capital, internal monopoly capital and the feudal interests in the country and at acquiring growing social control and management over them.

I presume that it is not necessary to go into all the details covered by our election manifesto. I will refer to the more important measures.

Concrete Measures

First is the question of foreign capital which has assumed such an importance in our economy that one is compelled to begin with it, however unpalatable and derogatory it may be to our honour and pride. As stated earlier, we have to write on a slate on which much has been written and blotched in the past.

The starting point has to be a bold and courageous demand for a long term, say ten years, moratorium on the payment of interest charges and annual repatriation instalments on foreign loans.

Consistently during the last ten years, the more the Government of India has bended in the matter of terms and conditions for receiving foreign loans the more onerous have been the terms imposed on us by the U.S.A., the so-called Aid Consortium of the Western powers, the World Bank (which is dominated by U.S. bankers) and similar imperialist agencies.

If only we show some guts like Nasser and some other leaders of the newly independent countries, the imperialists will pipe down. Despite all hullabaloo to the contrary, the imperialists do not give us a farthing in "aid" which they do not take back with a vengeance. "Aid" is not charity, it is extremely hardboiled business.

Plenty of statistical evidence has been published that the "aid" given to us by the Westerners is an insignificant part of

the profits made by them through unequal trade with us and other underdeveloped countries like us.

Unequal trade means the imperialists unloading their goods (machinery, components, spare parts etc.) on us at prices far higher than competitive world prices based on their real cost of production, while forcing us to sell our products to them (which are mostly raw and semi-finished products like tea, jute, leather, oil seeds etc.) at knock down prices, very often even below their cost of production.

This is sheer blackmail based on the fact that they are affluent and strong while India is needy. This has nothing to do with equity. It is no more justified than apartheid in South Africa or the treatment of Negroes in the U.S.A. In every international trade conference, India and all other Afro-Asian countries strongly protest against this plunder and demand that it must be ended.

But in the world of imperialist vultures, verbal protests are not taken seriously. They sit up and talk respectfully only to the representatives of those countries who muster the courage to tell them bluntly, "Well, gentlemen, this, this and this we are going to repay in such and such a manner; for the rest, good-bye." Only then they start rubbing their eyes and begin to calculate that they have earned such vast profits from our country in the past that it would not matter if they get less for certain years to come. Only then they realise the truth of the famous Sanskrit proverb, "When a wise man is faced with total ruination, he foregoes half of his claim."

Besides, where else can they get better terms to invest their money? So they will accept the position as cold-blooded, calculating businessmen, not as philanthropists.

I am sorry to have to explain this obvious point bluntly. But in an atmosphere in which the spokesmen of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry shake with horror at the very idea of our country deciding to declare a moratorium on foreign debts (I am speaking of a unilateral declaration, not begging on bended knees), when powerful voices are raised that it is "immoral" to do so, when the representatives of the Government of India quake in their shoes at

such a suggestion (as though American atom bombs would rain down on us the next moment)—under such conditions it becomes necessary to restate simple truths which Dadabhai Naoroji, R. C. Dutt and, after them, Prof. P. A. Wadia and K. T. Shah taught us when we were in our teens at college.

Similarly, the question of the scaling down of foreign debts must also be raised. The repatriation of interest and profit on foreign private investments in India must be stopped and such amounts obligatorily invested in Indian industry, under governmental control, until the country is out of the woods.

All collaboration deals between foreign and Indian big business which leave effective control in foreign hands or are otherwise detrimental to national interest must be summarily cancelled.

Being a communist, I am sure I will be asked if all this applies to the loans and investments of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries in India, and to the terms of our agreements with them.

Well, it would be out of place here to compare and contrast the terms of Socialist and imperialist loans to India, the purposes for which they are used, the question of control over joint venture, etc., and point out how generous the former are and how tightfisted and rapacious the latter.

All the same, I have no doubt that if India demands relief from the Western powers, the socialist countries will gladly make concessions to India in the same measure so far as their claims on us are concerned.

Neither morally nor legally were the socialist countries bound to pay us 47 per cent more on our exports to them after devaluation. No purchaser of Indian commodities in the West has done so. And yet the Soviet Union and other socialist countries agreed to do so voluntarily. No less an authority than India's Minister for Industries, Shri Mamubhai Shah, who negotiated the transaction after devaluation, paid handsome tributes to the Soviet Union for its generosity on his return to India from that country.

So those inclined to raise such questions will find that they rebound on them and do no harm to the socialist country.

To proceed. It is absolutely necessary to demand from the Western powers (this has been the position with the socialist countries from the beginning) that in future, all repayment of debt and interest will be done in rupee currency.

The single most formidable hurdle in the path of expanding our export trade (without which the foreign exchange crisis can never be solved) is the insistence of the Western powers on the return of debt and interest in dollars, pounds, marks, yens, etc.

The acceptance of rupee payment means that the foreigners accept goods produced or manufactured in India in repayment of our obligations to them. This will help us to kill many birds with one stone. It will help to bridge the gulf between our imports and exports, alleviate the foreign exchange crisis, eliminate the need to borrow new foreign loans for financing our deficit foreign trade, develop new industries in India, and secure employment for a good section of our unemployed workers.

It is an index of the servility of our rulers towards the Westerners, most of all, the U.S.A., that they do not force even this issue though that can be done without the slightest violation of the most orthodox bourgeois business "morals".

Next comes the question of Swadeshi, or what is now given the jargonous name of import substitution.

Under British rule, in the teeth of its political, economic and technical stranglehold, India developed the textile, sugar and cement industries because of the spirit of Swadeshi and sacrifice.

Now, twenty years after independence, the largest portion, i.e. 57 per cent (in value) of our imports consists of industrial raw materials, components and spare parts! Twenty-one per cent of the imports consist of food to which we will come later.

There are reports of official committees pointing out that many of the imports can be manufactured in India with our own resources of technology and know-how. Automobile parts, paper pulp, copper, alloy steel and innumerable such products

(some of them of vital strategic importance for national defence) can be produced in India.

Why is it not done? For the simple reason that from the selfish, profit-making interest of those industrialists who need these products as raw materials it is more profitable to import them than invest capital in their indigenous manufacture. Is this not a criminal, anti-national, treacherous scandal?

The country is being literally bled white because of dependence on foreign countries for capital, capital goods, food, foreign exchange and other things; unemployment is rampant; and the barons of Indian industry do not manufacture even such things as can be produced in the country. Neither does the Government compel them to do so.

Is it not incumbent on every patriotic Indian to force the Government to end its hypocritical talk of import substitution and take resolute steps for its implementation? Is this not one of the vital needs of the regeneration of our economy?

The import of long staple cotton for the manufacture of super-fine cloth is another disgrace. We spent sixty crores of valuable foreign exchange every year between 1960 to 1964 (and the drain still continues) for importing such cotton. The textile manufacturers said that that was for the purpose of exporting super-fine cloth and earning more foreign exchange. The recent Reserve Bank of India Enquiry (what could be more authentic?) has disclosed that 97 per cent of the cloth manufactured with imported cotton is sold in India and only 3 per cent is exported! If this is not downright anti-national cheating, what else is it?

Imports for the nylon industry are another crime. For want of space, I will not elaborate the list.

The banning of imports of goods which can be indigenously manufactured and of all luxury goods is a must for saving our scarce capital resources for nationally needed industries, for increasing employment and national production and for raising popular living standards.

The effective regulation of foreign trade i.e. its nature, direction, volume, etc. has become absolutely necessary. It is not necessary to explain at length that the existing licensing

system has not only failed to achieve its objectives but has led to corrupt practices which fleece the common people as also rob the national treasury on a vast scale.

Import licences are sold in the black market at fabulous profits or the goods imported by the licensees are sold at fabulous profits. This means that neither the consumers get imported goods at the due price nor do the high profits find their way into the public exchequer so that they could be used for reducing taxation or for capital investment.

Under-invoicing of exports and over-invoicing of imports is rampant which robs the country of scarce foreign exchange.

Besides, the monopoly export-import firms import goods which harm national interest. They also sabotage the diversion of our trade to newly independent and socialist countries because they are in league with foreign banks and traders and are motivated by their joint collaborationist interest instead of patriotic considerations.

It is impossible to break this vicious grip of internal and foreign monopolists over our foreign trade without its nationalisation. Such nationalisation will provide a huge source of capital accumulation which can be utilised for planned economic development in the interest of the common people.

Banks and Oil

The nationalisation of commercial banks which, as pointed out earlier, are now under monopoly ownership and control, is more than overdue. The control of credit is indispensable for the control of prices. In recent years the expansion of money supply in our country leading to inflation and spiralling prices has been taking place at a faster rate through the expansion of bank credit than the increase in currency.

Between 1950-51 and 1965-66 currency with the public increased by Rs. 1,628 crores. In the same period, bank loans increased by Rs. 1,503 crores. But whereas currency supply in 1951 was fourteen hundred crores bank loans in that year stood at six hundred crores.

The conventional (bourgeois) mechanism of attempting to

control credit and prices by changing the bank rate or restricting credit more directly have proved to be ludicrously ineffective. And official and semi-official surmonising to the plutocratic emperors who rule over our banking system not to monopolise bank credit in the interest of their families, friends and relatives but to offer it generously and at favourable rates to the medium and small entrepreneurs, artisans and peasantry, have been brushed aside by the bank bosses with utter contempt and cynicism.

That is why for all the three purposes of more effective control of prices, making bank deposits available to smaller people and for checking the abuse of public funds for speculation and swindling, bank nationalisation cannot be delayed for a day.

Speculative and forward trading in the stock and commodity markets must be banned. It is a contributory factor to the instability of prices. Financial resources used for such purposes should be directed into productive channels.

The complete nationalisation of the oil and petroleum industry is demanded, not only to end the notorious Anglo-American loot in this sphere of our national economy, but not a whit less, because oil is a most vital strategic defence material. No country, in our age, can be considered fully free, and no country's defence is secure so long as it has to depend heavily on foreign powers in respect of oil.

This is not a question of theory. The Anglo-Americans put an embargo on oil exports to India, and even their refineries in India threatened to cut off oil supplies to our Government when we had to defend our territorial integrity from the Pakistani military attack in 1965. Dependence on foreigners for oil means physical strangulation at moments of dire peril to national survival.

We had no oil extraction and refining worth the name (Digboi was a flea-bite) when we became free. Even Digboi was owned by the Britishers. Ninety-five per cent of the sales of petroleum products in India were controlled by the Burmah Oil Company, Caltex and Stanvac, later turned into Esso. It was all an Anglo-American family affair.

Then followed the three refinery agreements with Stanvac,

Burmah-Shell and Caltex which are now universally condemned in India and whose predatory stranglehold the Indian Government has tried to loosen. Even then, the three monopolies control an annual production capacity of eight million tonnes, a little over half of our entire national production. Their vast profits have been reduced only negligibly, not more.

It is a well known and undisputed fact that it was the Soviet Union that enabled India to break the deadly grip of the Anglo-American oil giants over this vital sector of our national economy. The Soviet Union was followed by another socialist country, Rumania.

These countries have aided us all along the line, viz., oil and gas exploration, extraction and refining. They have provided us with the necessary loans, machinery, technical experts and the training of Indian oil technicians in the U.S.S.R.

Thanks to these agreements and their extremely efficient and rapid implementation India has now three big refineries at Gauhati, Barauni and Koyali, in the public sector. Their production capacity is already nearly seven million tonnes a year. It will soon overtake and surpass the production of the Anglo-American refineries in India.

Though to a much lesser degree the Indian Oil Company is attempting to push forward in the marketing of oil in India, again in the teeth of Anglo-American sabotage, not excluding incendiarism. Such instances, too, have been reported in the press.

Anglo-American oil refineries and the distribution of petroleum and its products must be completely taken over by the Government. Both their ownership and management must be nationalised, Indianised.

Even the published accounts of the banks and oil companies show that they have already made profits exceeding many times their paid up capital. Reasonable compensation can still be paid to them, though not based on the market value of their shares.

However, the Government of India, in recent years, far from advancing further on such a path, have again started mak-

ing concessions to foreign private oil interests, under their pressure as also of their big business collaborators in India. This shift in policy must be reversed.

Factories and industrial establishments closed down due to mismanagement (most of the textile mills closed down come under this category) or running very much under capacity must be taken over and run by Government without imposing any wage cut on the workers.

The privy purses of the former princes must be stopped forthwith.

Coming to fiscal matters, what has been universally accepted and repeatedly asserted by the Central Cabinet must now be strictly enforced, viz., a drastic reduction in and rigorous limitation to deficit financing, the root of so many of our headaches and troubles.

Of course, such reduction involves the question of reduction in governmental expenditure. There is no question of denying the need of economy.

The key to such economy lies in reducing expenditure on the top heavy administration and on what is called "law and order."

Our services continue to be as top heavy as under British rule. Gokhale and Gandhi attacked the British Government unsparingly on this point contrasting the miserable per capita income of the poverty-stricken Indian with the pomp and splendour of the British rulers, the highly paid Civil Service, and so on. Gandhi declared a thousand times that it was a crime to impose such a highly paid bureaucracy on the land of the Dardranarayan.

Has anything changed by an iota in this respect in New Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta or any of the other State capitals? Is there any reduction in the expenditure on and at the Rashtrapati Bhavan and the State Governors? Has anything changed at the district headquarters?

The only change is that we have many times more ministers now than we used to have Executive Councillors during the British regime.

This is one extreme of the ladder. At the other extreme we

have miserable school teachers, clerks and chaprasis whose living standards have been brought down to such a level that we are confronted with sweeping government employees' strikes in State after State.

Expenditure on "law and order", more frankly on the police, has expanded by leaps and bounds overwhelmingly due to official economic policies leading to untold starvation, misery and pauperisation among the common people, thereby giving rise to mass discontent and struggles.

In State after State one feels as if the entire police force, the armed constabulary, and now, on occasions, even the army, is at war with the people of India.

On the occasion of the recent students' march planned in Delhi, every press reporter stated that the entire city looked like an armed camp, like an enemy city under military occupation. Such is the relation of our forces of "law and order" with the younger generation, the future citizens of India, the hope and future of our country.

What wonder if expenditure on "law and order" has risen to mountainous heights? Let the Government provide employment and food to the people, let it hold prices in check, and three quarters of the expenditure on the police can be slashed in addition to the restoration of peaceful conditions in the country.

Coming to taxation proper, Dr. Kaldor's enquiry and report years ago drew attention to the vast scale of tax evasion by the rich and by joint stock companies. In every session of Parliament, nowadays, two or three cases of the big fish robbing the treasury by evading taxes running into tens of crores are brought to light. This is done, firstly, of course, by legal jugglery, but also by downright bribery which does not stop at the civil service but extends to the ministerial level.

A ruthless drive for collecting evaded taxes must be launched. Occasional stunts for impressing the public that Government is seized of the matter, which is the present fashion, must end. Not merely that. All the money on which taxes have been evaded, i.e. black money which, even by conservative

estimates, runs to three thousand crores of rupees, must be confiscated and taken over by the state.

Hoarded gold, which also is estimated at three thousand crores, must be taken over by the state as a compulsory deposit at a moderate rate of interest and utilised for national economic development.

If deficit financing has reached the limit, indirect taxation, particularly collections from sales taxes and excise duties, have also reached the limit of popular endurance. In fact, excise duties and the sales tax have become the *kamadhenu* of our State and Central Governments. There has to be a planned and steady reduction in indirect taxation.

Reduction in the vast number of taxes in India, from the village panchayat to the Union Government, and simplifying the tax structure which has become a veritable maze, will help to reduce expenditure on tax collection, as also corruption and the evasion of taxes.

For instance, the ancient octroi and terminal taxes should be got rid of. We can have a uniform, all-India wheels tax on transport and a graded land tax instead of the existing colonial land revenue. Uneconomic holdings have to be exempted from the land tax.

Reduction in the number of taxes is not, by itself, a measure for reducing the total tax burden. But it will surely help to lighten the burden to the extent that it will reduce expenditure on tax collection.

Urban Development

India is getting urbanised. This is a welcome development because it proves that from being a backward, overwhelmingly agricultural country we are advancing into the age of science, technique and industry.

But capitalist urban development, particularly the capitalism of the get-rich-quick type we have in India, is also a curse. Soaring values of urban land, terrific housing shortage, slums, worsening conditions of sanitation and water supply, acute problems of education and transport, growing crime and

accidents, this is how the blessing of capitalist urbanisation comes to the common people.

The absolute minimum that Government ought to have done to relieve this agonising misery was to have taken over urban land at the very beginning of the first Five Year Plan, or at least before the industrially orientated second Plan was launched.

Even if this had been done at the then prevailing land prices (which could have been gradually recovered by Government in the form of a moderate tax on houses) the growing urban population would have been saved from the gigantic loot to which it has been subjected as a result of the sky-rocketing of land prices in the growing urban areas.

Speculation and profiteering in urban land is one of the worst scandals of Indian economy today. Not only in Bombay, Delhi and such cities but in any number of small industrial towns land prices have gone up twenty or thirty times in the last fifteen years.

Cement should never have been de-controlled. Its prices have already risen above the black market prices during the control period, and again cement is going into the black market. We have all the abuses and the corruption of the control period superimposed over a still higher price of cement! This is "free enterprise!"

Control of land values and cement prices, and the equitable distribution of cement provide the vital key to the alleviation of the housing problem in urban areas and the eradication of the slums. Not to do this and to "solve" the slum problem by forcible eviction of slum-dwellers is like keeping a person in a mosquito infested region and then attempting to cure him by big doses of quinine. Not the patient, but the mosquitos have to be eradicated.

The exploitation of the urban population through high rents, *pagdi*, and such abuses is, of course, a social crime. Its elimination will help substantially in improving the living standards of the urban working class and middle classes.

Attention must also be drawn to another aspect of the

question since, in this section, the question of capital formation is being treated as a running thread.

Taking over of urban land, which will now have to be done at drastically reduced prices, will release for national development literally hundreds of crores of rupees which are now locked up in land speculation.

A question in this section states it as a proposition that there is an obverse relationship between the popularity of a government and the taxation it imposes.

The proposition is not at all as self-evident as it appears. In fact, if one considers the matter coolly, the proposition is untrue.

Taxation in India is unpopular among the masses not because it is heavy. It is unpopular, firstly, because its burden falls dominantly on the poor and middle strata of the population while the rich get away with a lighter burden, either de jure, or through tax evasion.

Secondly, because, tax revenue is spent by Government mainly in the interest of the rich. It is all very well to speak of new schools, hospitals, roads and so on. That is the irreducible minimum that any national government would have to do.

Big salaries to the higher rungs of the administrative services, direct subsidies and loans to industrial magnates, like the Tatas, subsidies to exporters in the name of export promotion and earning foreign exchange, and a host of similar items of expenditure can be mentioned.

Thirdly, people also see the vast amount of public money that is simply wasted due to bureaucratic bungling, inefficiency, corruption and so on.

Recently, I heard a very intelligent worker say that he would genuinely welcome it if ten per cent of the value of every tender accepted by Government were officially set aside as a bribe to the officer accepting the tender provided the remaining ninety per cent was spent honestly and efficiently. A very bitter joke, but all who know existing realities will grant that it is a very pertinent and meaningful joke.

So dissatisfaction against Government does not arise from

high taxation. It arises because Government milches the poor and fattens the rich, with vast public funds going down the drain of waste and inefficiency, in the bargain.

Our people displayed an exemplary capacity for sacrifice in the cause of national defence when the country was attacked by China and Pakistan. Workers stopped strikes, worked longer hours, and in addition gave part of their wages for national defence. Poor women donated whatever little gold trinkets they had to national defence. Our soldiers (what else are they if not peasants in uniform?) gave their precious lives for the country.

Are they not capable of bearing a heavy tax burden, even if it pinches them, if it is equitable and is spent honestly and efficiently for patriotic purposes, for making the country strong and powerful in every respect, and for raising the economic and cultural standards of the common man? Surely, they are.

The rich complain of high taxation even when they are lightly taxed. They ought to be taxed far more, even if they howl.

As for tax evasion, it is really a part of the problem of corruption, the inevitable concomitant of get-rich-quick capitalism. We have to fight it as best as we can even in the given circumstances (how to do it, I will explain later), but to root it out it is necessary to break the backbone of foreign and internal monopoly capital. Short of it, we can have palliatives, but not a fully effective cure.

Land and Agriculture

Finally, we must refer to the basic, most vital and most massive problem of Indian economy, the problem of land and food production. This is a vast problem on which volumes have been written. In a small pamphlet, it can only be dealt with briefly.

Without breaking the prevalent land monopoly in the country (figures given earlier) and distributing land to the actual tillers of the soil, there can be no solution of the problem. Unless this is accepted without reservation all plans of

putting agriculture on a "war footing," of "package programmes" for agricultural development (the latest fraud of Shri Subramaniam) will, at best be petty palliatives, nothing more.

The point of debate is not whether large scale and mechanised farming is necessary or not. Of course, it is necessary.

The point is that the present policy of Government of organising large scale, mechanised, *capitalist* farms, backed by state aid in the form of fertilisers, irrigation etc., cannot increase the production of food and commercial crops to any substantial extent.

This is so because such a policy involves driving away tens of millions of peasants from the land, greater pauperisation in the countryside, and hence, *no incentive at all* to the common peasant to increase agricultural production.

And the common peasant is, and is bound to remain for a long time to come, the backbone of Indian agriculture. Unless *he* gets an incentive to increase food and raw material production, nothing much can be achieved. The chronic food shortage cannot be overcome.

Incentive for him means, first and foremost, ownership of the land he cultivates. This has to be followed by cheap credit, the purchase of his produce at economic prices, cheap irrigation, fertilisers, and so on.

The peasant must first be freed from the clutches of the landlord, the usurious moneylender and the private grain trader who suck him dry. Only that can make his economy solvent, and by making it solvent, give him the necessary incentive to produce more food and agricultural raw materials.

This has to be followed by the gradual introduction of various forms of co-operation, rising from the lowest level of credit, sales-purchase societies, and so on, finally leading to collective agriculture.

If we have our vast country in view, and not some patches here and there, this is the only way that can lead to large-scale mechanised farming in India. Forced attempts at large-scale, capitalist farming will not increase food production anywhere near our minimum requirements. Such attempts will be an

invitation to a peasant revolution. If the rulers want it, they will have it.

The food trade must be nationalised. Rich peasants, landlords and rice millers must be subjected to a levy. Foodgrains from middle and poor peasants should be acquired through monopoly or near monopoly state purchase by paying remunerative prices to the peasant.

At present private trade in grain, which has also developed into big private monopolies, fleeces the peasantry at one end and the consumers, urban as well as rural, at the other end. Even in normal conditions the difference between the price paid by private traders to the peasant and the price at which grain is sold to the consumers is between 15 to 20 per cent. In recent years, it has shot up to over 50 per cent.

State purchase of grain from the peasants and its distribution through rationing in towns and cities, and provision stores in rural areas will make it possible to pay higher prices to the peasants while, at the same time, lowering the prices charged by private trade to the consumers. Co-operatives, wherever available, must be utilised for food distribution.

It would stand repetition to say that the solution of the problem of food procurement and distribution is also, at one and the same time, the path of social justice and the path of capital formation for the mass of the peasantry for the purpose of a rapid increase in agricultural production.

Government must also procure such essential commodities as cloth, kerosene, sugar, medicines and edible oils directly from the producers at controlled prices. Their distribution can be organised through government shops, licensed traders or cooperatives.

Land distribution as proposed above combined with the distribution of government waste lands to agricultural labourers (the area of such land is not at all inconsiderable) will go a long way in solving the problem of landless labour. Not in the sense that it will make them well to do, but in the sense that it will give them considerable relief. They are by far the most neglected Cinderella in our country.

Meanwhile, legislation on minimum wages for agricultural

labourers, long since put on the statute book but hardly ever implemented, must be enforced rigorously.

Such, in the main, are the immediate measures proposed by us for regenerating our national economy and to ensure more food, more employment, lower cost of living, better housing, and more of the basic necessities of life to the vast majority of the people. As stated earlier, they are the immediate measures we propose in the existing conditions. As they are implemented, further feasible steps in the direction of a socialist reorganisation of our economy will naturally be adopted.

The various imbalances in our economy arise overwhelmingly, as the preceding treatment has explained because production is governed by the profit motive, not by that of social utility and national requirements.

The measures proposed above will make a beginning, and a very important beginning, in putting our economy on the rails of social and national needs. That is the way of establishing a proper balance between the various sectors of the country's economy. Of course, there can be no finality in this matter. Further measures will have to be taken, from time to time, as the situation arises to rectify such imbalances as will need rectification.

One question now remains, and that is a most vital question which must have struck the reader in the course of going through the preceding pages. How are all these proposals to be carried out? Who is to implement them? For it is evident that the entire spirit of the measures herein suggested goes against the policies of the ruling party, against the interests of the powers that dominate our economy today, viz., foreign and internal monopoly capitalists, the big bankers and traders, the vested interests in land, the erstwhile princes, and so on.

So the million dollar question is, who is to bell the cat?

The full reply to this question falls outside the scope of this pamphlet for it involves the question of the complete socialist transformation of India. Here we are dealing with the coming general elections, our programme for the elections and certain measures which can be adopted in the present economic and political context. (If the reader is interested in a full reply,

he can get it in another recent pamphlet published by the author, entitled "India's Path to Socialism.")

The basic reply to the question as to who is to bell the cat is this that radical economic measures which hit the profiteering and vested interests in society can only be successfully carried through by social and political agencies, social and political institutions, which genuinely represent the interests of the common, toiling people whose cause is sought to be advanced by the radical measures proposed.

To put it rather crudely, a programme for the undermining of landlordism and capitalism cannot be handed over for implementation to the governing body, say, of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry! Such a programme can only be implemented by an agency, by a body, in which the representatives of the working-class, the peasantry and the middle class are powerfully represented. This is simple commonsense, and needs no elaboration.

We always speak about the strengthening of Indian democracy. However, there is hardly ever a discussion on the question that the strengthening of democracy demands, first and foremost, the democratisation of Indian economy, and the creation of agencies which, by their social composition, will assure the implementation of reforms for democratising our economy.

The creation of such agencies calls for certain changes in the Indian Constitution and parliamentary structure with which we will deal in the chapter on political policies. Here, we will deal with agencies directly connected with the economic reforms recommended in this section.

We must have elected committees of landless labourers, poor peasants and tenants, vested with the necessary legal authority to implement land reforms in collaboration with officials appointed by government. Landlords and rich peasants have any amount of access to the officials, the ruling party and the local judiciary, as matters stand today. In fact, all of them come from the same social strata. It is the labourers, poor peasants and tenants for whom land reforms are meant, that

are utterly helpless to prevent the actual sabotage of land reforms.

Such committees, today, would be immensely helpful for organising food procurement also. The State governments have either abandoned food procurement or their agents allow the rich peasants and landlords to escape with light levies (not on paper, but in practice) while extorting all they can from the common and poor peasants. All talk of equitable distribution of our inadequate food supplies will remain in the clouds unless the agricultural labourers, poor peasants and middle peasants are mobilised and harnessed to the task of procuring stocks from those who have a substantial surplus. And such landholders exist not only in the surplus states, but even in regions which as a whole are deficit in food production.

Cooperative Societies of the poor and middle strata of the rural population will also be helpful in the implementation of the above mentioned tasks (both of which are admittedly of vital importance to our planning and economy) and can be fitted into the executive agency to be created for the purpose.

Coming to industry, both in the private and public sectors, the organised working class must have effective representation in the drawing up of plans as also in their execution. Effective working class participation in management will be an immense asset in reducing—if not eliminating—many of the ills (including mismanagement, waste, inefficiency etc.) from which our industry is suffering.

What is effective representation and participation? The first condition for this is that the recognition of trade unions must be based on the secret ballot of the workers in the industry concerned. Secondly, a minimum living wage and freedom from victimisation must be guaranteed. Once this is done, the mode and manner of workers' participation in management, its spheres, etc. can be worked out in practice through experience. The objective obviously would be that industry has to run smoothly in the interests of the workers and the people as a whole, and also produce a surplus for new investments. Smooth running certainly does not mean fattening

the capitalists at the cost of the workers, the consumers and the patriotic interests of the country.

In banks and similar credit institutions, the employees and small depositors must be represented in management. This is a vital necessity for dealing firmly with swindling, speculation and such other evils with which our financial institutions have been corroded. This is also necessary for channelising bank credit in the interest of the common people and entrepreneurs instead of the big fish.

Powerful tenant associations are growing in the urban areas. In Bombay, they have become thoroughly representative of the tenants' interests. Their biggest support, undoubtedly, comes from the slums, but one should know that large numbers of regularly employed workers and middle class people are also now driven to live in the slums.

There have to be stern laws against land speculation in urban areas (in fact urban land must be nationalised) and tenant organisations must be empowered to proceed against those who extort high rents and **pagdi**. They must also have authority to compel landlords to make repairs. This is, of course, a question of social justice. It is also one of the means of solving the housing problem in the urban areas which figures piously in all our Plans.

It may be felt that the agencies suggested here are very new innovations. But let it be clear that unless they are introduced (their concrete details can be modified or amended once the spirit underlying them is accepted), it is thoroughly useless to talk of radical economic reforms in our country.

I will illustrate the point. Both reactionaries and progressives in our country now point out the glaring failures of our public sector enterprises, whether in industry, finance or trade. The reactionaries, of course, want to bury the public sector by handing it over, first for management, and gradually in ownership, to the private sector.

Progressives do not want to do so. Firstly, because they are conscious that with all its failures, the public sector in India has laid the foundations of heavy industry in the country which the private sector, running after quick and maximum

profits, would never have done. Secondly, because they know that ending the public sector means a good bye to all prospects of an advance towards socialism.

So while big business wants to finish off the public sector by taking advantage of its weaknesses and failures, progressive elements are worried about how to overcome the weaknesses and shortcomings of the public sector.

But to be very frank, very few among the progressives realise that the root of the failures of our public sector institutions lies in the fact that their control and management is either in the hands of bourgeois bureaucrats who never make a secret of their antipathy to socialism, or quite often, in the hands of the scions of big business itself.

Is this not as bad as, or worse than, handing over the cause of prohibition to a committee of hardened drunkards? And yet this, the most crucial problem of Indian economy, is hardly given a recognition by our progressive economists who are no doubt sincere in their desire to make the public sector a success.

Neither in the sphere of economy nor in the sphere of politics is any material advance possible without unleashing a powerful mass initiative for the implementation of economic and political reforms. The active participation of the masses in the execution of popular, progressive policies is the very quintessence of democracy, and also the *sine qua non* of social, economic and political progress.

Obviously such initiative and active participation must have institutions through which they can be channelised and such institutions must be vested with the authority necessary to carry out their tasks and responsibilities.

The profound economic and political crisis in our country is the product of the fact that the ruling party and the institutions through which it claims to reform Indian society and economy are the defenders and protectors of the vested interests in every sphere of national life.

Unless this reality is reversed, there is no future for our planning, no future for our economic development, no future for social and political progress.

IV

DOMESTIC POLICY: POLITICAL

No ideals in human history have evoked so much suffering and sacrifice, so much revolutionary ardour on the part of the common people as democracy and socialism. And yet, no other political terms have been as much banalised, distorted and abused by the exploiting classes as democracy and socialism.

The questionnaire has correctly put its finger on the spot by suggesting that "active and intelligent participation by the vast majority of the people in the democratic process is the very essence of democracy."

So we come to what is meant by "the vast majority of the people" and "the democratic process".

It will be remarked that these are simple and self-evident terms that call for no clarification. This would be true but for the fact that powerful reactionary forces all over the world, and also in India, constantly distort and vulgarise these concepts through the press, the radio etc., to confuse and misguide the the people, precisely for the purpose of negating democracy.

Modern democracy arose in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in England, France and North America. It developed as a revolutionary struggle of "the vast majority of the people" against feudal despotism under the slogans of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. In concrete reality it meant the abolition of feudal land ownership and the distribution of land to the peasantry, the abolition of feudal despotic rule (in the case of North America, British rule) and its replacement by parliaments elected by the people. In France, this took place in the thoroughgoing fashion typical of France, while in other countries in a halting and compromising manner.

With the advance of capitalism in the nineteenth century and its later development into imperialism, democracy was

steadily divested of its revolutionary content and parliaments became instruments of capitalist exploitation and domination over the "vast majority of the people".

Hence, if we speak of democracy sincerely and seriously we have to be clear that the words "vast majority" must mean the common people, the oppressed and exploited masses.

Hindu communal organisations like the Hindu Sabha and the Jana Sangh mean the Hindu majority against the Muslim minority when they speak of "the majority of the people". In Pakistan, it is the opposite.

When capitalists and landlords secure a majority in parliament through political parties like the Indian National Congress on the strength of money, the control of the press and the support of the bureaucracy which comes from their own class, what they have in mind is the majority they command in parliament when they use the terms "majority" and "minority".

Clearly, all these are distortions and violations of the meaning of the word "majority" as related to the true concept of democracy.

Similarly, what do we understand by the term "the democratic process"?

Does it simply mean the right of the people, once in three or five years, to cast their vote in parliamentary elections in favour of one political party or another, or some independent candidate? Undoubtedly that right is valuable and must always be defended.

But is that all that we mean by the "democratic process"? In fact, can that right, by itself, constitute even the main content of the "democratic process"?

Whatever illusions we may have harboured under British rule that this right would assure the exercise of political power by "the majority" of the people once India got rid of foreign domination, such illusions have now been shattered by the experience of three general elections based on adult franchise.

The essence of this experience is that adult franchise and parliamentary rule give the people certain opportunities for fighting the domination of big money and landlordism, for securing concessions for the people, but nothing more.

In fact, the experience is worse. Unless the right to vote under parliamentary democracy is backed by powerful mass sanctions and certain institutional changes in the economy and the structure of government, even such freedom as the people enjoy in the parliamentary system is gradually undermined and suppressed by the lords of land and capital, and the country moves in the direction of autocratic police rule. A reputed Indian jurist has characterised the present Indian Government as a "constitutional dictatorship".

Never since the achievement of independence have there been so many shootings and killings in India by the police, so much of jailing and "preventive detention" of people whose only crime has been that they asked for bread, employment and the lowering of the cost of living, as during the last year or two.

It is an indisputable fact that adult franchise and existing parliamentary institutions, by themselves, have failed to protect Indian democracy from the offensive of reaction.

Hence the term "democratic process" though extremely apt and correct, must be understood in all its breadth and depth, in its full comprehensiveness.

The linchpin, the hub, of the democratic process is the democratisation of the nation's economy. To expect that political democracy in India or in any country for that matter, can become richer and more living while the concentration of wealth and economic power in the hands of a few proceeds apace, as has been happening in our country by all accounts (the Monopoly Commission's Report of 1965 is the latest evidence), is to expect the absurd. Democracy and monopoly capital are absolute contradictions. The arch enemy of democratic evolution in India today is the steady growth of the hold of foreign private capital and internal monopoly capital over our economy.

The preceding chapter has elucidated this process at some length and there is no need to go into it again.

What we are emphasising here is that the abolition of land monopoly and the distribution of land to the tillers, combined with social ownership and/or control of foreign and Indian monopoly capital, are not only economic measures.

They are the *sine qua non* of the objective of strengthening political democracy in India.

It follows that workers' participation in industrial planning and management, participation by bank and insurance employees in the management of financial institutions, teachers' participation in formulating and executing educational policies, participation by landless labourers and tenants in the execution of land reforms, participation by urban tenants in the solution of the housing problem, etc.,etc., **through duly constituted representative institutions invested with the necessary authority**,—all these measures are, at one and the same time, instruments for democratising our economy and for "bringing about more active and intelligent participation of the vast majority of the people in the democratic process."

Certain administrative reforms and amendments of the Indian Constitution are also necessary.

Some of them, e.g., the complete separation of judicial and executive authority, and making it a penal offence for the executive (the police must be specially mentioned) to interfere with or defeat the judicial process, have been demanded for a long time and need no repetition.

The costly and thoroughly useless upper chambers at the Centre and in the States have to go.

The directive principles and fundamental rights enshrined in our Constitution have been reduced to pious (frankly, hypocritical) platitudes. They have to be made constitutionally binding on whichever government comes into power, and hence, justiciable.

The question of reasonable compensation for the nationalisation of property is pre-eminently one of historical social justice and the rapid development of our national economy. It has to be unhinged from the notion of equity based on the "sacred right of private property", which is a euphemism for the protection of the citadels of feudal and bourgeois property. Our party does not advocate indiscriminate nationalisation without compensation. But the criterion of "equity" must be fundamentally altered.

The quantum of compensation should not be justiciable.

Similarly, workers' wages (whether in industry or agriculture) and the salaries of low-paid employees (manual or intellectual, governmental or private) cannot be based on the "principles" of "individual liberty", "free competition" and "the law of contract", as applied to present day society. Such application is based on the cruel fact of a divorce between labour and the ownership of the means of production. In reality it means the "right" of the owners of property to impose starvation wages on propertyless workers whose "freedom" lies in accepting such a wage or starving in the streets.

Wages have to be based on the calculation of a need-based living wage.

Trade union recognition, both in the public and private sectors, must be made obligatory by law. And the representative character of the trade unions to be recognised must be decided by the secret ballot of workers in the industry concerned.

Some of these reforms can be carried out by enactments under the existing provisions of the Constitution. Some may need constitutional amendments. That can be left for jurists to decide.

The electoral system has to be changed to provide for proportional representation and the right of recall.

In England, the British electoral system yields a fairly correct proportion between the votes polled by a party and the deputies elected by it to parliament. This is due to the fact that only two parties dominate British political life, that their strength is fairly balanced, that each has a traditional mass of supporters, and there is a certain unattached vote which swings from one side to the other in accordance with changes in the situation.

This is patently not the situation in India, nor can it be artificially created here, since our social and historical background is totally different. We have one powerful party and a number of others, national and local, not one of which can match in strength, singlehanded, against the ruling party.

Under the circumstances, the British system of elections adopted in India has repeatedly enabled the Congress to be returned to power on the support of a minority vote. Not

merely this. The Congress secures a majority in the legislatures far in excess of the percentage of votes secured by it, while oppositional representation is far less than its support at the polls.

The situation has led to deep, frustration, and recently to such acute resentment among the common people that they have nearly lost faith in parliamentary elections.

Proportional representation will enable each party to secure representation in elective bodies proportionate to its voting strength. Elementary democratic justice demands that this must be provided for.

Proportional representation is urgently needed for yet another reason. Because of the inability of political parties, taken singly, to defeat the Congress at the polls, we are now witnessing the growth of one very unhealthy tendency in Indian politics.

That is the tendency of parties with very divergent and even conflicting policies, parties of the right and the left, banding together in various types of electoral agreements to defeat the Congress.

The inevitable casualty in the elections is the advocacy of clearcut programmes and policies which would educate the electorate and enable the voter to vote intelligently for the party whose policies he or she wants to be implemented.

The present electoral system thus encourages political parties to rest satisfied with a mere negative exposure of the ruling party. In effect, the anti-Congress vote, though a vote against Congress policies and practices, is not always or necessarily a vote for a particular alternative policy.

Proportional representation will go a long way in eliminating this development. It will not, and need not, lead to the elimination of electoral alliances. But it will surely help to forge alliances of really like minded parties pursuing similar if not identical policies. We will have leftist, centrist and rightist alliances. That will be all to the good for it will canalise Indian public opinion along clearly demarcated political lines.

The right of recall is meant to keep the elected representative alert, vigilant, active and loyal to his electoral com-

mitments. This right cannot altogether solve the problem of political parties departing from their electoral programmes after election. But it can check gross betrayals of electoral promises and such disgraceful practices as crossing the floor without seeking a new mandate from the voters.

The violation of civil liberties, and above all, the right of association and of organising peaceful mass struggles has gone to such atrocious lengths in recent years that the solution of the problem calls for clear-cut, almost foolproof statutory provisions.

Emergency legislation has become permanent. Triennial extension of the Preventive Detention Act has become a ritual. Not satisfied with the extraordinary powers given by it, the ruling party has now armed itself with the Defence of India rules against which even the Supreme Court is helpless. Many of these arbitrary powers violate the Indian Constitution itself. The police resort to baton charges and firing as though they were shooting pigeons.

In England, and even in De Gaulle's France and Johnson's America strikes take place which paralyse whole industries. In France, the whole country is often brought to a standstill. And yet, not a bullet is fired, there is little loss of blood or life. Here, in the India of Gandhi and Nehru, a hotel workers' strike is treated like a conspiracy to overthrow the government by armed insurrection.

All "emergency" legislation has to be summarily scrapped. Police firings must be stopped excepting in cases of arson and incendiarism. The army is meant to defend the country from foreign invasion. It is not meant to protect the fabulous profits of the industrialists or the unconscionable profits of black marketeers from the workers and the people. It is not meant to protect the ruling party from the wrath of the people. It cannot and must not be used to choke or suppress civil discontent against official policies.

We have said in the preceding chapter that the development of monopoly capital and the pursuit of monetary and fiscal policies which encourage hoarding and black marketing are at the root of corruption which has honeycombed and demoralised

our administration. Indeed, corruption has now reached a stage where it constitutes one of the serious dangers to our national existence.

Growing corruption is the inevitable concomitant of growing private monopoly. The evil has no effective solution excepting in the context of a determined struggle for the democratisation of our economy and the creation of popular institutions, as explained earlier, vested with the necessary authority for that purpose. Active participation by the people in the execution of national policies, which again, is dependent on the policies themselves being progressive and in popular interest, is the key to the rooting out of corruption and bureaucratic inefficiency. This is the quintessence of the administrative reforms of which we are in crying need.

This does not mean that certain immediate measures cannot be taken.

All cases of alleged corruption, particularly at the higher rungs of the administrative services, or of ministers of government, or pertaining to big business concerns, must be obligatorily referred to an independent judicial authority. And such authority must have full powers of investigation and administering exemplary punishment including confiscation of property.

It is equally necessary to summarily dismiss civil servants holding views in conflict with accepted national policies. We have high-placed officials in the foreign relations department who make no secret of their opposition to non-alignment. We have managers of public sector enterprises who are known agents of the private sector. We have food procurement officers who are undisguised champions of "free trade" in food-grains.

This is not only an invitation to bureaucratic inefficiency. It is an invitation to bureaucratic sabotage of national policies.

It hardly needs to be stated that anti-people police officials have to be thrown out and the entire police force re-educated in the spirit of popular service and respect for the common people.

It is often stated that the strengthening of democracy in India needs wider and more education, the removal of mass

illiteracy, and so on. Illiteracy must, of course, be eradicated and the people must have more and better education.

But the problem of strengthening our democracy is not essentially a question of academic education. Democracy in India is being undermined not because we lack sufficient people well-versed in constitutional law. A person does not become a progressivist or democratic just by mastering the principles of our Constitution.

There are plenty of educated people who are hardened anti-democrats and far more who have no academic education and yet are fervent democrats to their marrow. Hence the notion that Indian democracy is not making an advance because we have too many uneducated people is basically wrong.

The essence of the democratic spirit lies in the feeling of equality and brotherhood between men as men. It lies in faith in the creative capacities and the sense of justice of the common people.

In present day society the dominant factor which perforates, in fact, pulverises this spirit of equality among people is the polarisation of wealth and poverty. The growing rich naturally develop a feeling of superiority, of cynical contempt for the "common, illiterate" masses. They lose faith in the masses. The deadliest possible enemy of democracy is precisely this snobbery and loss of faith. What room can there be in such an atmosphere for "a government of the people, by the people and for the people"?

Not merely this. In such an atmosphere, the snobbish upper classes possessing wealth and power, and it follows, their political representatives, pit themselves increasingly against popular initiative and intervention in every sphere of social and political life.

On the one hand, such rulers and that section of the intelligentsia and the bureaucracy which is like minded, constantly go on complaining that the masses lack enthusiasm, that they are apathetic towards economic planning, that they are lazy and do not work hard, and so on. On the other hand, they treat every mass initiative, every genuine "participation by the vast majority of the people in the democratic process", as a hostile

force to be curbed, chained and suppressed.

This the crux of the attitude and policies of the Congress rulers towards the people today. It is absolutely the crucial reason for the economic and political crisis which faces our country, the crisis of Indian democracy.

Once it is clearly understood that throttling popular initiative in public life means weakening democracy and that providing the maximum scope for such initiative is the key to the strengthening of democracy, it is not difficult to grasp the role of the Bandh movement which is sweeping the country in recent years, and much more so in recent months.

The questionnaire asks whether the growing Bandhs will lead to anarchy. The very reverse is the truth.

Who is creating anarchy in India today? Is it the economic policies of the government which lead to mass starvation and to economic chaos that are creating anarchy or those forces in the country which are fighting back these policies?

Is it the unbridled and lawless repression let loose by the police, who now destroy college laboratories and shoot down professors within college premises that is unleashing anarchy in the land or the students and professors who are standing up to police vandalism?

The Bandhs, therefore, far from being a threat to Indian democracy and orderly progress, are the single biggest hope that democracy and orderly progress in India have a chance of survival.

The Bandhs are a proof of which every Indian patriot, democrat and socialist ought to be proud that the noble spirit of freedom of the man in the street, of our much maligned common people, is not dead.

Neither our cynical rulers nor armchair democrats and intellectuals (with all their subjective sincerity which I do not question) can save Indian democracy. The fighting spirit and unity of the "uneducated masses" expressed in the form of the Bandhs alone can save our democracy, and it will.

What is at the root of the Bandhs, i.e. united actions in the form of strikes and hartals by the industrial workers, white col-

lar employees, students, teachers, the petty shopkeepers, and so on?

Is it irresponsible agitation and provocation by the left political parties that is the cause? All such talk is nonsense and slander. No amount of fire-eating agitation can bring millions of people on the street if they are happy and contented, if they do not themselves want to go in for action, if they were not convinced that that is the only course left open to them to alleviate their misery and suffering.

Every section of the Indian people is now convinced that no amount of petitioning the employers and the government can get them bread and employment. No amount of pleading, however justified, will make government take the necessary measures for holding the price line. Nothing short of direct mass action can put an end to bureaucratic callousness, indifference, inefficiency, bungling and corruption. Nothing can make sense to the rulers excepting a state of semi-revolt among the people.

The people are convinced that the ballot box, however useful, is not a solution by itself, to their agonising problems. They have no intention of boycotting the ballot box, at least not yet. But they are convinced that their voice as expressed in the ballot box must be backed by united and powerful mass actions.

This is at the root of the Bandh movement which is flaring up all over country. Nothing can stop it, certainly not bullets. The only thing that can end the Bandhs is victory for the just demands of people, the democratisation of our economy, politics and social life as explained in this and the preceding chapter.

DOMESTIC POLICY: SOCIAL

Social, economic and political problems cannot be put into watertight compartments. Much more so under conditions of extreme crisis when political reactionaries exploit social reaction as their most powerful ideological weapon for dividing and attacking the forces of democracy.

Communalism and Casteism

It is not at all surprising that the imperialists, the big capitalists and landlords, the trading community and the former princes are all in love with organisations of communal reaction such as Hindu Sabha, the Jana Sangh, the R.S.S., the Rama Rajya Parishad, the Muslim League, and similar organisations.

It is not at all surprising that these forces and organisations are opposed to secularism and democracy, not to speak of socialism.

It is not surprising that they invariably cover up such opposition by raising the bogey of "religion in danger", equating secularism with immortality.

The right of women to inherit property—so long as that institution exists—is accepted as a major social reform for enabling women to assert their equality with men. Hindu reaction attacks the granting of that right as equivalent to the dissolution of the "sacred" family system.

The most recent experience of the insensate utilisation of religious feelings for working up communal passions is still very fresh in the popular mind. Hindu reaction unleashed an orgy of mass frenzy and incendiarism in Delhi, the war of naked Sadhus as it was called, under the pretext of "protecting the sacred cow, our mother." Milch and draught cattle must be

protected, but that has nothing to do with exploiting the issue for inflaming communal passions.

It is also not surprising that reactionary communal organisations are opposed to economic reform. They are all opposed to the abolition of landlordism, state trading in grain, and generally to the public sector.

In Pakistan we see the other side of the medal. Communal passion is worked up among Muslims against Hindus for disrupting and suppressing the forces of democracy and economic reform.

Thus the cynical game goes on, one communalism feeding on its opposite, with a common agreement among all to oppose secularism, democracy and the advance towards socialism.

In Indian conditions, communalism becomes a grave danger to national integrity and security. If India advances along the path of democracy and socialism no amount of Pakistani propaganda can create pro-Pakistani sentiments among the Kashmir Muslims. If Hindu communalism grows apace, its inevitable effect on the minds of the Kashmiri Muslims is the growth of pro-Pakistani feelings which can be exploited by Pakistan for its designs on India.

No patriotic and progressive Indian can deny that our social life calls for democratisation no less than our economic and political institutions. This is necessary in and by itself, and also because failure to democratise our social life is already leading to serious repercussions, and will lead to far graver repercussions, threatening our existence as a nation.

Communalism and casteism are fundamentally incompatible with national unity and democracy. Both of them clearly cut across national loyalties. Those who believe in socialism must further understand that they make mince meat of working class solidarity, the unity of the toilers, the fundamental requisite of India's advance to socialism.

Caste, in addition, becomes an instrument of class exploitation and domination since, in most cases, the upper castes interlace with the exploiting classes. This applies in the reverse to the untouchables, the most scandalous product of the caste system.

A number of political parties in India not ostensibly based on religion and caste, and most of all, the Congress, exploit religion and caste for securing votes in elections, for the distribution of positions of pelf and place, and so on. This vitiates our democratic structure and pollutes the democratic consciousness of the people. It also disrupts the unity of the people based on democratic programmes and policies.

Communalism based on religion and caste prejudices is a poison for the growth of culture, the culture of human brotherhood and equality, which alone can be a truly democratic culture. Every conceivable inequality, made hereditary and hence unchangeable in the bargain, is the built-in feature of the caste structure. No force in India shackles the human mind and the freedom of thought as much as the caste system.

This is not to say that religious freedom in India should be hamstrung. The point is that no tolerance can be shown to communalism and casteism masquerading under the garb of religious freedom. No country which values democracy, national unity and national integrity can permit its existence to be torn to shreds in the name of religious freedom.

These deep-rooted and harmful divisions, of course, cannot be abolished overnight, they cannot be abolished by law. Even untouchability, which certainly deserved abolition by law, has not been eradicated despite such enactment. Caste and communal divisions need constant mass campaigning and education for their eradication. The pioneering zeal and passion of our great pre-independence social reformers are as much needed today as under British rule.

But the preaching of communal or religious hatred can certainly be banned by law and its rigorous enforcement. This will help to curb the pernicious activities of communal and casteist political parties and the cancerous injection of communalism into Indian politics.

However, one has to be absolutely clear that it is impossible to fight communalism and casteism by delinking that struggle from the struggle for political democracy and the democratisation of our economy.

It is painful (in fact, pitiable) nowadays to find many well-

meaning Indians, some of them very eminent in public life, not seeing the organic inter-connection between the three struggles. Much more so when the notorious American C.I.A. shamelessly exploits Hindu communal sentiment in India and its reverse in Pakistan for doing the gravest damage, primarily to India, but also to Pakistan.

The open champion of big business, the landlords and the princes in India, viz., the Swatantra Party, strives might and main to forge an understanding with the Jana Sangh. The Tatas finance the Swatantra Party and reactionaries inside the Congress. The Birlas also do the same in addition to backing up the Hindu Sabha.

And yet, many learned Indians, while wailing over the undermining of secularism in the country, and pitiously preaching the non-communal "values" of life, do not utter a word against the imperialists and the barons of land and capital in India, but for whose support the stigma of communalism can be wiped off the face of India within a few years.

The struggle against communalism and casteism cannot and will not succeed unless it is based on the people's struggle against foreign and Indian monopoly capital and landlordism. The latter struggle is not only the most powerful weapon, but an indispensable weapon in the struggle against communalism and casteism. For that weapon alone enables the vast masses to understand the hidden, ulterior motives of those who seek to divide and exploit them on the basis of religion and caste.

No mass movement and no force in India fights as doggedly and aggressively against communalism as the working class movement, the trade union movement. No section of our people is as much free from the communal virus as the working class. Why is this so? For the simple reason that every day the working class, to preserve the prime requisite of its advance, viz. its unity, has to fight the employers and all vested interests who whip up communal, casteist and linguistic conflicts to divide and defeat the trade union movement. All sincere opponents of casteism and communalism must ponder over this fact.

The struggle against casteism and communalism also demands that full protection is given to the just rights of the mi-

norities. In this connection specific mention has to be made of Muslims and the scheduled castes.

Muslims, who constitute the second biggest community in India and occupy a distinctive place in our national life, have to be guaranteed full protection in regard to their specific cultural, social and religious rights. The real test of a secular democracy lies in its attitude to minorities. It is an unfortunate fact that in India today there are certain reactionary, orthodox and revivalist elements belonging to the majority community who are seeking to reduce Muslims to the position of second-rate citizens. Such elements should be vigorously fought out and isolated. It is the duty of the majority Hindu community to ensure that the secular character of our state is not endangered, and that the Muslim minority, as all other religious minorities, are given full protection in matters relating to their culture, language and religious beliefs. Security of their life and property has to be guaranteed not merely in law but in life.

Every form of discrimination against the minorities, whether in recruitment to government services, in trade, commerce and administration or in the sphere of educational and cultural development should be put an end to. Such text-books or educational courses which create in the minds of youth hatred or prejudice against any minority community should be eliminated and the whole educational system should be thoroughly secularised.

In the realm of language, Urdu which is spoken by a very large number of Muslims, particularly in the north, should be given its due place in states like U.P., Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi etc. All facilities should be provided to Urdu-speaking children to get education in their own mothertongue up to the highest stage. Besides, Urdu should be allowed to be used for official purposes as the second language, Hindi being the first, in all such states or regions.

All specific and legitimate grievances of religious minorities should be speedily examined and redressed by the government and to facilitate this special committees of minority boards should be set up at the state level.

Large sections of our people officially described as scheduled

castes, continue to suffer humiliation in all spheres of life, whether in services, trade, education, political status or social and personal equality. Of course, laws have been passed against untouchability and all congress leaders speak against it. But in actual life, it still exists, though not in the old virulent form. In the factories and towns it is less so but it survives quite strongly in the villages.

Millions of persons belonging to the so-called scheduled castes have embraced Buddhism. In many places, they have given up claiming special privileges as scheduled castes. All this however should not mean that the state should not give them special help to overcome their backward conditions of living, work, and education and due place in services.

The Language Problem

Coming to the language problem in India one has to recognise that it has certain peculiarities and complications not found in other countries. Not that it is basically different from the language problem in other multilingual countries. Even then it faces us with certain problems peculiarly our own.

We have thirteen very developed languages. A number of them are fairly equally developed so that it would not be true to say that we have one very highly developed language with the rest trailing far behind.

Secondly, Hindi, the mother tongue of the largest single linguistic group in the country, is the language of a minority of the Indian people taken as a whole. Besides, for the people speaking the four languages in South India it is much more difficult to learn Hindi than for those in the North whose mother tongues are akin to Hindi.

It is accepted by democratic and patriotic opinion in India that English, a foreign language, cannot continue as the medium of inter-state intercourse in our country. Such a language has to be an Indian language already widely spoken or understood in India, and capable of being learnt without much difficulty by those who do not know it. Hindi stands this test better than

any other Indian language, and as such, has to be developed as the medium of inter-state communication.

At the same time, the difficulties mentioned above are real. They arise not only in the sphere of administration and recruitment to the services. They arise in all national gatherings in the fields of political, educational, scientific, economic and cultural intercourse.

These difficulties, though challenging, must not exasperate us. They must not lead us to seeking over-simplified solutions in the name of furthering the aims of national integration, or to pushing ahead with such solutions on the strength of administrative measures and their bureaucratic implementation.

On the contrary, the difficulties must deepen our consciousness, which can be ignored only at great peril, that the unity of FREE India can only be maintained with the voluntary consent of all its people. This applies to the language question also, on which popular feeling is extremely sensitive, even more than certain other issues of national unity.

Voluntary unity means democratic unity, and hence one has to begin from the bottom, from the grass roots, as it is said.

This implies that the primary condition of the solution of the language problem in India is full freedom and encouragement to the development of all the languages of the country. Any attempt to develop Hindi as a language of all-India intercourse, even if it avoids every semblance of coercion, will fail if people speaking the various regional languages are not convinced that their own languages enjoy the fullest opportunity, assistance and encouragement for growth and development.

That is where linguistic states become absolutely necessary. This was recognised by our freedom movement long before independence, and though the ruling Congress party resisted the formation of such states after coming to power, it was finally compelled to reorganise our states on a linguistic basis.

The simple and basic purpose of unilingual states is that administrative and all other governmental work from top to bottom should be carried on in the language of the people, so that they can participate and intervene in public affairs without which all talk of democracy is hypocritical.

Not only this. The development of a language in the spheres of literature, science and economic intercourse also gets warped and stunted if it does not become the language of administration.

One can never forget that when we were under foreign rule, it was the British who were the protagonists of multilingual states. One can also not forget that after independence it was the reactionary, big bourgeois and feudal vested interests in Hyderabad, Bombay, Kerala and Gujerat that offered dogged resistance to the formation of unilingual states of the Telugu, Marathi, Malayali and Gujerati people.

It is equally significant that opposition to linguistic states has invariably been put forward in the name of the interests of "trade", "Deccan culture", "security for capital" "cosmopolitanism", and such other guises, which are transparent covers for the selfish interests of land and capital. (Has Calcutta lost its "cosmopolitanism" because of being the capital of Bengal?)

Goa's merger with Maharashtra has been held up on the ground of "Goan culture", a pure euphemism for the ideological-political domination of the Roman Catholic Church. Now the Goan people have to decide the issue which they will do very soon.

Having been forced to reorganise Indian states on a linguistic basis, the Congress rulers have been pursuing an opportunist policy with regard to the borders of such states.

Linguistic states do not hang in the clouds. They stand on solid earth. As such they must have borders with their adjacent states. And once one accepts the principle of unilingual states it follows that the borders should be settled by faithfully adhering to the principle of linguistic homogeneity and geographical contiguity taking the village as a unit.

This is not only the only principled solution of the border question. It is the only solution that can bring about an amicable settlement of border disputes by assuring **all** the people concerned that the borders of their states are determined by one and the same principle, and a democratic principle.

But, of course, it is not democracy that our rulers are bothered about. They are bothered about how to maintain their

political power in this state and that. That is where selfish, reactionary and opportunist considerations creep in. Contiguous Marathi speaking areas in Mysore cannot be transferred to Maharashtra because trading interests in Mysore do not want to lose the rich, tobacco growing strip of Nipani or the trade of Belgaum. Kannada speaking parts of Kasargode cannot be transferred to Mysore because the Congress, already routed in Kerala, will suffer a total collapse.

Such are the petty and dirty interests in the Congress which keep the border disputes festering for years and years. And yet, these are the very elements who sanctimoniously sermonise to the people in the border areas not to "quarrel over petty issues", "to look at questions from the larger national angle", "to think of national unity" and so on.

The settlement of border disputes between linguistic states on the basis of the democratic principle enunciated above will also strengthen interlingual unity, national unity. It is an important measure for solving one of our acute problems of national integration.

The formation of linguistic states, though a basic measure for the development of the regional languages has to be followed up by other measures.

The regional language has really to be made the language of administration and education. Governmental work has to be carried on, from top to bottom, in the language of the people and the medium of education has to be the local language right up to the university stage.

This implies that simple and easily understandable vocabularies and text books have to be prepared. That needs linguistic scholars imbued with the democratic spirit. Or else we get atrocious vocabularies of which the common people cannot make head or tail. Such vocabularies are often so jaw-breaking and highly Sanskritised that it is a torture to have to use their terminology.

One such vocabulary has been published by the Maharashtra Government. Its words make no sense even to educated Maharashtrians, not to speak of common peasants and workers. It has become an object of ridicule all over the State. Such scan-

dals cannot be permitted. They make a mockery of the basic purpose of linguistic states which is to enable common people to understand and participate in public administration.

It has also to be understood that there are bound to be sizeable linguistic minorities in linguistic states, that is to say, people speaking languages other than the state language. The question of such minorities arises more acutely in industrial cities (e.g. Bombay) which attract manual and intellectual workers from other parts of the country.

Proper facilities have to be provided for such minorities in the spheres of administration and education. This principle has to be very clearly accepted. Once it is done, its concrete application can be worked out in accordance with the particular conditions and requirements of each such minority.

It is on the basis of the entire approach explained above that Hindi has to be developed as a language of inter-state and inter-lingual intercourse in India. In parliament, members must be free to speak in their mother tongue, and such speeches have to be simultaneously translated in Hindi.

In the same context, one has to realise that English also has a place, and will continue to have a place, in India.

We were, and are, totally opposed to English continuing as the language of government and administration. But we surely recognise the value of English as a language of international intercourse for India. Once we get rid of it as a language of administration its association with alien, imperialist rule comes to an end.

Then what remains is our long association with it as one of the richest languages of the world. What remains is the fact that it is one of the leading international languages in every sphere of human intercourse. What remains is the obvious fact that our long association with it makes it easier for us to learn and teach it than any other internationally used language. What remains is the fact that English brought us not only foreign rule. It also brought us Milton and Shelley, Newton and Darwin. Indeed, even Voltaire, Marx and Lenin came to us through English. It was English that brought us revolutionary democracy and socialism.

The three language formula has been worked out as a solution of giving the regional language, Hindi and English, their due place in our national life as a whole. If worked in the proper spirit it should yield good results and surely deserves a serious trial. But again, our rulers, administrators and academic authorities have a way of twisting even the best of decisions and policies in actual implementation. That has to be prevented.

A question has been raised in South India, and to an extent, in Bengal, that in examinations for all-India services people speaking the regional languages are at a disadvantage against those whose mother-tongue is Hindi. In Madras, the point was driven to the extreme of issuing the slogan, "English ever, Hindi never".

Such a slogan, of course, cannot be justified or defended. But the solution lies in permitting people speaking regional languages to appear for all-India examinations in their own language. That will end apprehensions regarding discrimination in favour of the Hindi speaking people because of the language of examinations being Hindi.

At least for a transitional period such a course is necessary. After some years, when people in various parts of the country become more conversant with Hindi, apprehensions regarding discrimination should come to an end.

Problems of linguistic and regional chauvinism have been raising their head in recent years and unless they are properly tackled, can become one more threat to national unity and integration.

It is totally wrong to lay the blame for this development at the doors of the principle of linguistic states. In fact it is a reactionary trick to mix up the two issues, for which a new word has been coined in recent years, viz., "linguism". This facile term has become a tool in the hands of those who want to tar the principle of linguistic states for the purpose of covering up their own chauvinistic aims and interests.

What is at the root of linguistic and regional chauvinism? The root lies in the fact that not only foreign but Indian big business is concerned only with profits in the development of

Indian economy. They are concerned, neither with industrialising the undeveloped parts of the country nor with raising popular living standards.

This tendency, in fact, leads to what is called the uneven development of capitalism. Practically it means that backward regions tend to remain backward while advanced regions forge still further ahead. Regional disparities and imbalances grow instead of being overcome.

For instance, since facilities for transport, banking, foreign trade, and for securing all kinds of technical requirements are already greater in Bombay and Calcutta, capitalists prefer to start new industries in such cities and their environment while Kerala and Orissa continue to remain the Cinderellas of Indian economy that they have been in the past.

The complications arising from such a development, in fact, go further. For instance, even in Maharashtra, industrialisation gets centred in and around two or three urban areas while not only distant Marathwada but the Konkan region within a stone's throw south of Bombay city remains neglected and backward. Rural unemployment in the Konkan region is as acute as in Kerala.

Social complications also get interwoven in this general picture creating still more serious headaches. For instance, the Bengalis and the Maharashtrians, who do not easily take to industry and trade because of traditions and habits going back to centuries, suffer from an intense feeling that with all the pomp and grandeur of Calcutta and Bombay they are still the *Oliver Twists* in their own metropolitan cities which are dominated by capitalists from outside these states.

This is a dangerous situation not only for our economy but for our basic national unity.

Recently an attempt was made in Bombay (a warning signal of how bourgeois reaction exploits its own creation viz., uneven development, for still further accentuating social conflicts) to whip up Marathi sentiment against "all Southerners". The specious plea put forward in defence of the campaign was that the "Southerners invade Bombay and deprive Maha-

rashtrians of their jobs and housing accommodation in the city."

The attempt was defeated because of the strength and traditions of the working-class movement in the city which has forged multi-lingual and multi-religious unity through decades of united struggles and sacrifice. But there is not the remotest doubt that the power behind the campaign was the big industrialists and mill-owners of Bombay who, under the garb of protecting the interests of the Marathi worker, wanted to disrupt the trade union movement in the city with the ulterior motive of sacking Marathi and non-Marathi workers alike.

So those who talk glibly about "linguism" and regional chauvinism must know what they are talking about. They must know who are the real arch-villains who inflame chauvinistic sentiments among the common people. They must know that sermonising against chauvinism to all and sundry, which in practice, means the common people, is barking up the wrong tree.

There is a proverb in Marathi which says that one should not hang an innocent person and allow the thief to go scot free. In plain words, it is not only folly but crime to blame the common people for "linguism" and regionalism instead of putting big business in the dock.

The solution to the problem of linguistic and regional chauvinism lies in genuinely democratic planning, such planning as will develop all the regions of India in a balanced and even manner, such planning as will provide for a faster rate of growth for the backward regions, such planning as will provide employment and decent living standards to all people irrespective of their language, religion or caste, such planning as will replace private ownership of the means of production by social ownership so that production is not dictated by the lure of profit but the aim of social uplift and enlightenment.

It is understandable that this cannot be done in a day. It cannot be done by waving a magician's wand. But the point is that for the last eighteen years we have been moving in just the opposite direction. Individual, social and regional inequalities, instead of being steadily eradicated, are being accen-

tuated. This is the breeding ground of various kinds of chauvinism, narrow and self-centred loyalties, disruptive and separatist tendencies.

Those who pursue such policies, more pointedly, the Congress rulers, have no business to lecture to the "people at large" about the evils of chauvinism and narrow-mindedness.

The cure for all such evil tendencies is a radical break with the economic and social policies of the rulers. Unless this is done the country cannot advance in the direction of solving the problems raised by them. Unless this is done, the problems of communalism, casteism and linguistic chauvinism will only worsen. God forbid the dawning of the day when they threaten to dismember and Balkanise the India that we so much love.

As an immediate measure for tackling the problem of regional disparities and imbalances it is necessary to give wider powers and authority, particularly in financial and economic matters, to the states of the Indian Union. The Seventh Schedule of the Constitution must be revised and amended so as to enlarge the powers of the states and abridge those of the Central Government.

Students And Education

Future historians will probably denounce our present rulers far more for the harm they have done to our younger generation than the utter mess they have made of our economy. For the younger generation is the builder of tomorrow's India, the hope of the proud and happy future of which we dream. To ruin youth is to blast our future.

It is clear that our young generation is angry, extremely angry, angry to the point of losing all concern for life and property, its own included. It has lost faith in the older generation. The mighty student upheaval in Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar during September and October leaves us in no doubt about the extremely explosive situation in the world of students and youth.

In fact, more. The world of teachers and lecturers, from

the primary to the university levels, is also in ferment. In part, it is in conflict with the students. Increasingly, and correctly, the students and teachers together are in conflict with the Congress ministries, the administration, and above all, the police.

Such is the grim reality with which we are faced.

What a contrast with India under British rule when the national leadership was the inspiration and object of emulation for youth! Nay, more. Most of our pre-independence giants were teachers themselves.

Tilak and Gokhale began their life as teachers, Tagore was a teacher, Gandhi was nothing if he was not a teacher. And this was so, not merely because Gandhi founded national universities in the very throes of the non-co-operation movement. Gandhi possessed the most valuable and indispensable quality of a teacher, viz., identity between precept and practice.

Further, in pre-independence India, all our national leaders insisted that students and youth must be politically minded. Gandhi brought hundreds of thousands of students on the street. It was the British rulers who tried might and main to de-politicalise youth and education so that they might not become "infected" with the spirit of patriotism.

And now we have rulers who admonish youth, ad nauseum, to keep out of politics. And, of course, they dare not ask students to follow "in the footsteps of the leaders," since they themselves have sunk nose deep in the mire of pelf, place, nepotism, prestige, intrigue and every conceivable form of corruption and moral degradation.

And when the tensions, frustration and pressures arising from such an intolerable situation lead to mass outbursts among students the ministers and the trigger-happy police are of course there to drown student discontent in pools of blood.

Youth will be youth, and must be youth. Properly led, it invariably chooses the path of idealism, struggle and sacrifice. But it is equally true and inescapable that given a dirty environment and dirty models, its enthusiasm and love of adventure will lead it to undesirable paths. Youth reflects the vir-

tues and vices of the elders. That has been so in the past and will remain so till eternity.

The problem of youth and education, therefore, is fundamentally and urgently a problem of the physician, the older generation, healing itself. We have so much talk of educating youth. The first thing necessary is to educate the educators.

A political leadership which preaches socialism and builds capitalism, which fawns upon the tycoons of Indian industry, which wines and dines with notorious black marketeers, which declares in Parliament without batting an eyelid that it is prepared to barter national honour for a mess of American wheat, which beats up boys and girls in schools and hostels, is incapable of inculcating in the minds of youth the virtues of patriotism, democracy and socialism.

No wonder that we do not find a trace of these ideals in our textbooks from the primary right up to the university stage.

Where is the textbook on Indian history which exposes the crimes of British rule as Dadabhai Naoroji did in his "Poverty and un-British Rule in India" or as Pandit Sunderlal did in "Bharat-men Angrezi Raj"? Where is the textbook which inspires today's youth with stories about the heroism of Bhagat Singh and Chandra Shekhar Azad? Not one.

Not merely this. The passion with which Tilak, Gandhi and Nehru roused crores of our people to fight "this satanic Government" (Gandhi's own words) is totally missing in our present day textbook life-sketches of the three great leaders.

On the contrary, many of our textbooks are more anxious to prove the "generosity" of the British rulers in "peacefully transferring power to Indian hands" than in glorifying the struggle and sacrifice that brought us freedom.

Where does this come from? It comes from the fact that our rulers dare not think of Indian economic development without knocking at the doors of the Anglo-Americans for everything from food to defence material. So we must not only praise their present "generosity". We must also praise their past record in India.

In the name of religious and spiritual instruction what is

often taught is sheer superstition. Emphasis on religion as the indispensable source of moral and cultural values accentuates the consciousness of belonging to separate social categories at an impressionable age, which in its turn, becomes the breeding ground of a separatist, communal and casteist outlook among the young. Not a single textbook teaches children to reject and denounce communalism and casteism as something degrading, anti-national and anti-democratic. Again, how is this to be done when the rulers think in terms of caste and religion in selecting candidates for elections and for ministerial posts?

The way our textbooks deal with planning and socialism is literally amazing. The "advantages and disadvantages" (sic) of the public and the private sectors are taught as though it was a question of choosing between cauliflower and cabbage, of enumerating seven points in favour of one and eight points in favour of the other. And that in a country whose declared aim is socialism! With all the aid we receive from the socialist countries, with all our friendly relations with them, one has yet to come across a textbook which explains the qualitative significance and value of socialist aid.

Textbook writers are at perfect liberty to criticise the economics and politics of socialist countries if they want to do so. But elementary academic conscience demands that their viewpoint is **first presented as they present it themselves**. Barring exceptions, our academicians present socialist life and doctrines from the American angle and then, of course, prove that "there can be no freedom under totalitarianism."

Where is the textbook on democracy which champions the fundamental rights of freedom of speech, press, association and strike as the indispensable bedrock of democracy? Obviously, this cannot be done by academicians whose jobs depend upon the favour of ministers for whom the fundamental right of democracy is the right to shoot down workers and students.

In fact, further. Such a treatment of democracy is not possible for academic institutions dependent on grants from the Ford Foundation. It is not possible in an atmosphere where every progressive teacher or professor stands in terror of being hunted down by the C.I.A. (in strict secrecy, of course) as a

"fellow-traveller". We are still under the shadow of the Indo-American Foundation. If it materialises after the elections, as it very well may, we will have to bid good-bye to the last remnants of patriotism, democracy and socialism in the sphere of education.

The first thing necessary for reforming our educational system, therefore, is that our textbooks must be imbued with the spirit of patriotism, democracy, secularism and socialism. They must rouse and inspire the younger generation to fight the opponents of these ideals as the enemies of the country and its progress.

Youth must have an ideal. It must have an ideal for which to live and struggle. Or else, it is bound to be allured by cheap pleasures, glamour, sex and rowdism of which there is no dearth in lewd novels and journals and on the screen.

Together with improving its patriotic, democratic and social content, our educational system needs a radical reorientation to meet the changed needs of a developing country.

The number of schools, colleges and students has increased greatly. Even then opportunities for vocational education, particularly technical and medical, are far less than the number of young people who want to enter such institutions. They are inadequate in relation to the needs of the country.

This itself leads to corrupt practices. Many vocational institutions charge high capitation fees for entrance whereby poor and competent students are kept out while the children of rich parents, even though not duly qualified, secure entrance in colleges.

The cost of education has risen so much, much more so during the last two years, and further still after devaluation, that even well-to-do parents find it beyond their means to give full education to two or three children. In such a situation, it is the young sister in the family that is the first to suffer because of our customs and traditions.

School and college fees have risen. Hostel rents have been raised. Messing charges have rocketed. Textbook prices have shot up. Sports needing accessories have become a dream for the overwhelming majority of students.

It is absolutely necessary, under the conditions, to increase the number of vocational institutions and make education upto the matriculation examination completely free. Besides, monetary assistance must be given to poor and deserving students right up to the university stage.

The nightmare of educated unemployment has to be ended. This question falls in the purview of educational reform to the extent of orientating the system in accordance with national needs. But it falls much more in the purview of national economic policies.

Today, we face a very strange and agonising picture in the country where we need more teachers, writers, engineers, technicians, scientists and doctors than we have and at the same time, there is no employment for those that are already there.

This chronic condition has to end. How to do it has been dealt with in earlier chapters. Here, when we are dealing with problems of youth and education, the point to stress is that the single most disturbing factor in the life of our students is the dark prospect of unemployment which stares them in the face after the completion of their courses. This is very much responsible for the apathy, cynicism and tendency to make hay while the sun of parental protection is shining, which are found among many of our teen-agers.

The question of academic freedom, both of the teachers and students, has always been there. Recently, it has grown in dimension and also become extremely acute.

Influential members of the party in power must cease interfering in schools, colleges and universities in the matter of appointments, promotions, discipline, examinations, the admission of students, and such matters.

This is one of the most corrupting influences in our academic institutions. It is a most objectionable violation of the independence and autonomy of academic authorities. The scandal has now gone to the length of Congress factions exploiting students for bringing various forms of pressures on teachers and professors. Lecturing to opposition parties not to "exploit student discontent for party politics," Congress leaders are themselves guilty of such exploitation.

The sanctity of academic premises and campuses must be restored and respected by the police. It is one of the gravest illustrations of deteriorating political conditions in India that what the police dare not do under the foreign regime they now do with impunity in "free and democratic" India. Worse still, Congress ministries defend such atrocities by the police against the traditional immunity of academic institutions from police interference.

College unions have become defunct in most cases. They have to be revived and their membership made compulsory. At the same time, a mechanical and formal approach to the question of student unions will not succeed in achieving the objective of making students articulate and giving them scope for constructive activity and developing a sense of responsibility.

Student unions have rights and responsibilities. Their rights have to be respected if the sense of responsibility among students is to grow. Deprivation of rights, turning student unions into rubber stamps of the fatwas of academic authorities is the surest way of crippling them and an invitation to student discontent flowing into other channels.

Student unions have to become vehicles of student aspirations and urges to the college authorities. Their demands have to be reasonably met. The growing distance between students and teachers arising from the swelling of the student population has to be bridged. It needs sympathy and understanding. Very often teachers are not conscious of the innumerable difficulties which students have to face. Academic authorities cannot and must not assume an air of superiority, of dictation. "Take it or leave it" methods will not work with the new self-conscious generation.

This is the way to solve what is now called the problem of "student indiscipline". By far the greater part of what is called such indiscipline is healthy discontent taking aggressive forms for lack of fruitful channels of communication and exchange of views between students and teachers, lack of normal means through which reasonable student demands can be satisfactorily settled. Some part of student "indiscipline" is healthy

discontent flowing into unhealthy forms. Not much is unhealthy in itself.

Teachers' demands must also be met by the ruling authorities. The student problem cannot be solved without a simultaneous tackling of the teacher problem.

The teacher-student ratio has to be restored to normalcy. Huge classes mean bad and indifferent teaching made worse by loss of teacher-student contact so very indispensable to check up the students' progress as also for the exercise of personal, moral influence by teachers over students.

The question of teachers' salaries has been crying for solution for years. The most noble profession is one of our worst paid professions. That not only leads to teachers seeking private tuition to make both ends meet. That is also one of the factors leading to corruption among teachers.

The student question cannot be solved by raising bogeys about "instigation by opposition parties," and "student indiscipline." Such bogeys are nothing but a pretext for "solving" the student problem by "law and order" methods. It is a pretext for resorting to rustications, stoppage of grants to academic institutions, indefinite closures of schools and colleges, and lastly, to the tear gas, baton and bullets.

The problem can only be solved positively, by faith, and by a sympathetic approach to the younger generation.

Mr. S. K. Patil recently called student leaders "vagabonds". A leadership which so characterises youth is a leadership condemned by history.

VI

INTERNATIONAL POLICY

India's foreign policy has been a matter of evolution during the last nineteen years. In the beginning it was variously described. Gradually as it took shape during the fifties it came to be commonly characterised as non-alignment. Barring parties of extreme reaction, all Indian political parties now support it as our national foreign policy.

In fact, India under the leadership of Nehru is generally considered the architect of non-alignment. Many newly independent countries, and some others besides, now describe their own foreign policy as one of non-alignment. Hence it has attained the stature of an international category in the comity of nations.

A policy considered by so many countries, in a situation similar to ours, as being in their national interest and also in the interest of international amity, cooperation and peace, must surely have substance. It cannot be meaningless or unreal, despite the fact that the term used to define it, viz., non-alignment, is negative and does not clarify its positive content.

It would, no doubt, have been preferable if the policy had been given a positive name. Its absence has been one of the reasons, though by no means the main reason, which has helped interested parties to twist and distort it, to divest it of its true content.

It may be asked, who is to determine the true content and how? The reply is, history, which is a question of fact and not opinion.

Prior to independence, India was not only aligned. In foreign policy it was a pure puppet of Whitehall. Both in the first and the second World War we were declared a belligerent country by the Viceroy of India on orders from the British

Government. No one asked us whether we wanted to be on the British or the opposite side in the Wars, or whether we wanted to remain out of them altogether.

So non-alignment after independence meant, first and foremost, getting out of the clutches of British imperialism in matters of foreign policy.

This was by no means easy despite the attainment of independence, which is evidenced by the fact that as late as 1951-52 no one in the world considered us as non-aligned nor did we make any claim to be so.

We should remember that British troops remained on Indian soil for quite some time after 15th August, 1947. Our entire military supplies from bullets to tanks (with extremely minor exceptions) were of British manufacture. The top officers of the Indian army were British. The others had been trained at Sandhurst and other British military schools. The training of the Indian army, including strategy and tactics to be employed in actual war, conformed to the British military pattern. Not only this. The Indian army and navy (such as we had) was part of the British military and naval forces deployed for "guarding British interests" from Aden to Hong Kong.

This was the military aspect of the question. Economically, we inherited the colonial domination of British imperialism.

Basic industries were virtually non-existent in India. The sinews of national independence and defence of a modern country, viz., steel, non-ferrous metals, heavy chemicals, heavy engineering plants, oil, armament factories, etc., were either conspicuous by their absence, or if present on a meagre scale, were dominantly owned by the British.

Our foreign trade, foreign banking, shipping etc. were mainly British owned and controlled.

The top civil servants manning our home and foreign departments were, of course, "more loyal than the king," more British than the Britishers themselves.

Such was the situation when India achieved independence. No profound scholarship is needed to prove that it was any-

thing but conducive to the pursuit of an independent foreign policy, whatever its character.

It was in this initial period that India continued to allow recruitment of Gurkha troops, on Indian soil, by the British, for their war in Malaya. North Korea was declared the aggressor against South Korea without the slightest attempt at any independent enquiry, the moment the U.S.A. made the declaration. Many such instances of "independent" India crossing the t's and dotting the i's of Anglo-American foreign policy, in the earlier years of our independence, can be cited.

It is to the credit of the vision and determination of Nehru, and the tenacity of Shri Krishna Menon as India's Defence Minister, backed, of course, by Indian patriotic opinion, that India began laying the foundation of heavy and basic industries in the country, as also of ordnance and armament factories under the Defence Department.

It was this growing industrial independence that gave substance and assertiveness to our political independence. Thus it was that India could, and did begin to work for an independent foreign policy, the policy of non-alignment.

A blind man can see that, in the given circumstances, an "independent" foreign policy meant, and could only mean, a policy independent of Anglo-American domination. Similarly, a "non-aligned" foreign policy meant, and could only mean, struggling out of the shackles that had enchained us to British foreign policy.

India started taking bolder and independent positions in the UNO. It played a leading part in organising the Bandung Conference in 1955. Nehru visited the Soviet Union for the first time as India's Prime Minister. India condemned the Anglo-French attack on Suez. It came out in more open support of colonial liberation movements and joined the newly independent countries in demanding freedom and self-determination for all subject countries still growing under the imperialist yoke.

Is it any wonder that Dulles foamed and fretted against non-alignment, called it "immoral" and all sorts of names? Is it any wonder that the Anglo-American monopoly press has

always been peevish about non-alignment, treating it as "treachery" and "ungratefulness"? What greater act of "ingratitude" could a former "slave" of Britain commit than refuse to recognise the overlordship of its "master"?

It would, however, be only a half truth, and objectively, less than half the truth, to claim that we broke through forced alignment to non-alignment on our strength alone. We certainly could not have done it had we lacked the necessary courage and determination. But in the age of steel and oil, and even further, the age of atomic power and electronics, it needs more than courage and determination to become self-reliant, i.e. independent in industry, technique and science.

It needs advanced and powerful friends who are prepared to render unselfish aid to underdeveloped countries for the latter to develop such self-reliance.

And such friends we found in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. China has chosen a different path. But she has done so not only against us but against most of the Afro-Asian countries and, indeed, against her brother socialist countries.

It is an unchallengeable historical fact that in every single basic, heavy and strategic industry it was the Soviet Union and other socialist countries that enabled us to break the Anglo-American blockade, the Anglo-American conspiracy to keep us in a backward, colonial, dependent condition despite our attainment of national independence.

Bhilai, Barauni, Ankleshwar, the Heavy Engineering complex at Ranchi, Bokaro, and a host of other such magnificent projects are an eloquent testimony to this undeniable truth.

In all these and similar instances, India always and first approached the British, the Americans, the West Germans, and such "friends and benefactors" to help us erect the necessary plants and projects. In every case they trotted out a hundred pretexts and excuses to cover up their designs to perpetuate their economic and technological stranglehold over our country. If they did undertake to help us, they sabotaged the projects in practice, as in the case of Rourkela. The West Ger-

man press itself had to confess that the German steel industry had met its "Stalingrad" at Rourkela.

And then India turned to the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. Such collaboration has steadily grown and developed to the full satisfaction of our rulers, who are by no means admirers of the Soviet system or of People's Democracy.

The same applies to defence equipment and factories. It is not possible here to go into details. Readers desirous of knowing all the facts should refer to two excellent pamphlets ("For Self-reliance in National Defence" by Com. Indrajit Gupta, M.P., and "Self-reliance in Oil" by Com. Balraj Mehta) which give revealing and minutely documented evidence of what the Anglo-Americans have done to sabotage the development of our defence and oil industries and what the Soviet Union and other socialist countries have done to strengthen them.

To mention some instances. It was the Soviet Union which gave us three squadrons of MIG supersonic fighters. Down to this day the Anglo-Americans have consistently refused to give us supersonic military aircraft which they supply in abundance to Pakistan.

The Soviet Union has supplied us with high altitude military transport planes indispensable for our defence in Ladakh and NEFA. Light tanks for high altitude operations have also been supplied.

And most valuable of all, India is putting up factories for the manufacture of MIG supersonic fighters, with Soviet aid, within the country itself. For the first time a plant owned by our Government will come into existence on Indian soil, manned by Indian engineers, technicians and workers, to turn out a first class modern supersonic plane of topmost quality for our IAF pilots to fly.

Our experience in foreign politics ran parallel to our experience in the sphere of building basic and defence industries.

Whether in the UNO or in their direct relations with India, the Soviet Union and other socialist countries have consistently respected India's independence and sovereignty, stood by us in our aspirations for the liberation of Goa, and have rendered

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economic and other assistance to us without any political strings whatsoever.

The Anglo-Americans opposed the liberation of Goa by India. Their press castigated Nehru for sending Indian troops into Goan territory calling his action "aggression", "abandonment of Gandhiji's principle of non-violence" and what not. Even the NATO of which Portugal is a member, threatened to intervene. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, gave full support to our action and hailed the liberation of Goa and its integration with India.

The experience about Kashmir is even more revealing.

Though Kashmir acceded to India in accordance with an Act of the British Parliament, the Anglo-Americans have consistently questioned the validity of the accession. Every time the question of Pakistan's aggression against Kashmir has come up before the Security Council of the UNO, Anglo-American spokesmen have made the withdrawal of Pakistani forces from Kashmir conditional on India agreeing to hold a plebiscite in Kashmir under UNO auspices, meaning their own supervision.

The Soviet Union, on the contrary, has held from the beginning that India's sovereignty over the whole of Kashmir, including the Pakistan occupied territory, cannot be questioned.

The Anglo-Americans suspended their military and economic "aid" to India, despite clear commitments given earlier, when Pakistan attacked us in 1965. All Soviet commitments, on the other hand, were honoured in letter and spirit, as stated in Parliament by the Defence Minister himself.

It must also be noted that when China attacked us in 1962 the Anglo-Americans practically demanded that India must link up with their "defence" plans in South East Asia (meaning their plans of military aggression) if we were to receive military assistance from them for defending ourselves from the Chinese attack. Again it was the policy of the Soviet Union that remained unchanged.

All Western economic "aid", even in the matter of food when millions of Indians have to face grim famine and starvation, has political strings. Even the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, said so in her press interview only a week ago.

The political strings include pressures on India not to speak up on American crimes in Viet Nam, to scuttle the public sector of our economy, to submit our plans to the World Bank for its approval, to devalue the rupee, to allow unrestricted import of private Anglo-American capital into India on terms dictated by it, to accept the Indo-American Education Foundation, and a hundred such matters impinging on our national honour and sovereignty.

And now we have to witness the disgraceful and humiliating spectacle of the photographs of Miss India—Miss World appearing in our daily press, while being kissed by the American butchers of Viet Nameese women and children. Can any cultured and self-respecting nation in the world allow such a thing to happen?

Once again it is socialist aid which carries no strings, which has been admitted by the spokesmen of the GOI itself.

Such is the history of India's struggle to move in the direction of non-alignment from the state of forced alignment.

A constant struggle against imperialist economic, political and military domination combined with efforts to establish growing relations of friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries—such has been the essential meaning of non-alignment, such the essential condition for giving flesh and blood to the policy which carries that name.

In the measure in which the rulers of India have pursued this path, in that measure India has succeeded in becoming non-aligned. In the measure in which they have knuckled under imperialist bullying and pressures, in that same measure India's freedom and sovereignty, and hence our non-alignment, have been compromised and undermined.

Such knuckling has grown in recent years. That is where our non-alignment and national freedom are in jeopardy.

After the preceding explanation, it should not at all be difficult to understand that non-alignment necessarily means a foreign policy of support to colonial liberation movements, Afro-Asian solidarity, world peace and disarmament, and cooperation between all nations as free and equal entities, in their mutual interest.

This follows because like us till twenty years ago, there are still subject nations struggling for national freedom. Further, the newly independent Afro-Asian-Latin American countries also have to continue their struggle against neo-colonialist imperialist policies, just like us.

We are all in the same boat, with the same problems, the same enemies, the same friends. What else can we do, not only in their interest but our own, except to join hands with them, stand shoulder to shoulder with them in our common struggle for common ideals?

This is the simple meaning of Afro-Asian solidarity, now extended to include the Latin-American continent.

And peace we need not only because a world war in the atomic age will be a disaster for mankind, but even for the more elementary reason that a poor, starving country like ours cannot build its economy and improve its living standards excepting in conditions of peace.

Like any self-respecting country valuing its freedom, we have defended ourselves, and shall do so again if we are militarily attacked. But our endeavour has always been, and must remain, to settle our differences with our neighbours peacefully and through negotiations. Modern war is too costly a luxury for countries such as ours.

A foreign policy of non-alignment, therefore, means an anti-imperialist, anti-colonial policy for the purpose of strengthening world peace and mutual cooperation between free and sovereign nations. So defined, friendship with the socialist countries becomes a necessary and indispensable part of non-alignment.

We have to pursue such a policy because it is in the best interest of our own country. It is the only foreign policy which helps us to strengthen our national independence and democracy, to build our national economy and raise popular living standards.

We have to pursue the policy also because it is conducive to world peace and progress, it is conducive to the interest of countries in the same situation as India.

There is no conflict, and wrong to imagine that there is any, between our interest and that of world peace and progress.

The policy described above corresponds to the interest of the overwhelming majority of the Indian people and, in that sense, has secured recognition as a non-partisan, national policy. Nehru used to say repeatedly that he could not conceive of any Indian Government pursuing a foreign policy other than that of non-alignment.

And yet, the policy surely has opponents in India. As stated earlier, some opponents accept it nominally while putting interpretations on it which amount to its emasculation. Others, like the Swatantra Party, call openly for its rejection.

Who are these people? We have referred to them at the very beginning of this pamphlet.

It is the big Indian monopolists, bankers, landlords, and princes who are dead against the public sector, the democratisation of our economy and socialism. They want unrestricted freedom for the development of "free enterprise" in India.

It is natural that they should want full and free collaboration with foreign private capital and, in consequence, lining up with the Western powers in matters of foreign policy. They want to minimise, if not break, India's friendly relations with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

They cannot be expected to, and do not, in fact, support non-alignment.

So some of them feign to support non-alignment while reducing it to a banality. For instance, non-alignment surely means that India should not join any military blocs. But it surely does not mean a formal equidistance from the imperialist and the socialist countries. It does not mean balancing between the two. It does not mean a cynically selfish foreign policy of "having the best of both the worlds."

Some of such "supporters" of non-alignment, for instance, consider that it is "non-alignment" to blame the U.S.A. and North Viet Nam "equally" for the blood that is flowing in Viet Nam. Others suggest that both China and Taiwan should have a place in the UNO. The suggestion is supposed to prove that India is "non-aligned."

This, of course, is pure opportunism and cynical bargain-

ing. It is just such balancing tricks that have lowered India's prestige in the international world during the last two years.

The Swatantra Party is more "honest" (i.e., brazen) for it demands the abandonment of non-alignment and an open lining up with the Western powers as India's foreign policy.

It is not necessary to explain all over again the implications of such a policy for our country. In one word, it means a return to our former colonial status. It means that we mortgage our political freedom to the Anglo-Americans, give up all hope of industrialising and modernising the country, and once again become a raw-material producing appendage of the imperialist powers.

If we are true to our salt, if we love our freedom, and honour, if we want to be respected in the freedom-loving world, if we want economic and social progress in our country, we have to strengthen and not weaken the anti-imperialist, anti-colonial content of non-alignment.

We must demand that American troops are withdrawn from Viet Nam unconditionally, and the country left free to decide its own future. We must recognise the Democratic Republic of Germany which we have still not done despite all the technical and economic aid it has been giving us. We must boldly support all African countries subjected to imperialist pressures and aggression.

Such a foreign policy combined with vigorous efforts to build our basic and defence industries at a faster rate is the only path for building an independent and powerful defence structure.

Our relations with Pakistan and China certainly need improvement. Not only for idealist aims but as a necessity for saving our scarce resources for a rapid development of our economy and improving popular living standards.

But the task is not easy. With the prevailing mood of the rulers of Pakistan and China, with their growing collusion, and with Anglo-American support to Pakistan, the problem becomes even more difficult to solve.

We have to strive patiently to revive the Tashkent spirit, and to seek the assistance of genuinely friendly countries

through whom negotiations can be reopened. It calls for great patience and perseverance. And it is going to take time. But there is no other way.

Ultimately, it is not only in India's interest, but **equally in the interest of China and Pakistan** that all the three **live as good neighbours**. If we cannot solve our disputes with **the two** by war, neither can they resolve their differences with us by war. And no country can indefinitely pursue policies harmful to itself. That is the basis of our hope and confidence that the India-China conflict and Indo-Pakistan conflict not only must be solved peacefully, but will be solved by peaceful methods in due course of time.

Why Jana Sangh ?

by **Balraj Madhok**

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Bhartiya Jana Sangh (Indian People's Party) came into existence as an all India political party on 21st October, 1951. The decision to form this party was taken at a convention held at New Delhi on that day which was attended by over 300 delegates from all over the country. The convention was presided over by late Dr. S. P. Mukherji, who was the guiding spirit and motivating force behind it and who was elected as the first president of the party at the same time.

The need to form a nationalist, democratic opposition party had begun to be felt immediately after freedom. The Constituent Assembly of India, which also became the Parliament of the country after 15th August, 1947, did not have a single member in the opposition. Most of those who had been elected to the Constituent Assembly on the Muslim League ticket opted for Pakistan and the remaining changed caps overnight and became Congressmen. With the inclusion of Dr. S. P. Mukherji and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in the first cabinet, the opposition voice was almost completely silenced. But since the first cabinet had the semblance of a national team rather than a party team, the absence of opposition in the first Parliament was not very much noted for the first few months after freedom by the common people. But it was clear to all the thinking people even then that the omnibus character that the Congress had developed during the freedom struggle could not be maintained after it had been put in power without doing grave harm to the Indian democracy. That was why Mahatma Gandhiji suggested the dissolution of the Congress party as such and formation of new political parties on the basis of economic and political thinking of their constituents. That advice of Gandhiji was not heeded by his top followers, who decided to maintain

the Congress as it was and share the power of government inspite of their ideological and temperamental differences.

The differences between the two factions of the Congress led by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Patel came on the surface quite early. While the approach of Sardar Patel towards the problems facing the country was more pragmatic and nationalistic the approach of Pandit Nehru was more coloured by ideological considerations and was therefore more dogmatic and unrealistic. He was more of an internationalist than a nationalist in his approach to political issues and more of a Russian than an Indian in his approach to economic issues. But since both Sardar Patel and Pandit Nehru were indispensable for the Congress, both decided to adjust with each other on the basis of non-interference in each other's departments and affairs. This soon led to difficult and even dangerous situations. Nehru's insistence on handling the affairs of Jammu and Kashmir, Hyderabad and Hill areas of Assam through the Ministry of External Affairs instead of leaving them to be handled by Sardar Patel as the Home and States Minister, created those complications which have made the Kashmir and Nagaland problems that they are even today. The situation in regard to Hyderabad was saved when cabinet decided to entrust Sardar Patel with the handling of its affairs after Nehru's handling of it became a complete failure.

The difference of approach between these two giants of the Congress party towards Pakistan was even more basic and glaring. The appeasement policy that Pandit Nehru began to pursue towards Pakistan from its very inception was in keeping with the appeasement policy that the Congress had been pursuing towards Muslim League before freedom and which had directly led to the partition of the country. This policy of appeasement towards Pakistan was contrary to the best interests of the country and therefore was galling to all nationalist Indians. His policy towards Communist China and Tibet also went against the national sentiments and national interests. He wanted to give a leftist turn to the economic policies of the government as well. But he could not do much in this respect so long as Sardar Patel was alive. But the well known diffe-

rences in the approach of these two top leaders of Congress in regard to economic matters, began to plague India's economic policies from the very beginning.

Dr. S. P. Mukherji, before he joined the cabinet, belonged to the Hindu Mahasabha. He had a very clear mind and definite outlook in regard to the national problems. He was particularly committed to securing a fair deal for 14 millions of Hindus, left in East Pakistan after partition. He was a nationalist and a democrat to the core of his heart. Therefore he began to feel ill at ease in the Nehru cabinet pretty soon. But there was a community of thinking between him and Sardar Patel. But as time passed, Sardar Patel, because of his failing health, his forboding about his death and his strong loyalty to the Congress party as such became less and less assertive against Pandit Nehru whose mass appeal gave him an edge over Sardar Patel in the public mind. Things came to a head early in 1950 when Pakistan launched a planned campaign to convert, exterminate or squeeze out the Hindus of East Pakistan. Lacs were butchered or converted and millions were forced to fly for safety to India. This was a clear violation of partition agreement and a direct challenge to Indian leadership, particularly to Sardar Patel and Dr. S. P. Mukherji, who had personally given assurances to the Hindus left in East Pakistan that their interests will be watched and they will not be allowed to suffer because of their being Hindus in the new state of Pakistan. Sardar Patel publicly gave expression to his views by demanding that Pakistan must cede some districts of East Pakistan to India wherein East Bengal Hindus might be resettled. The world opinion was also shocked by the reports of massacres in East Pakistan and there was a general feeling that India would be justified in taking some kind of Police action in East Pakistan to save millions of human lives. Just then, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, who seemed to have got wind of the Indian thinking through Pakistan agents in Indian Foreign Office, made a dash to Delhi and succeeded in getting away with what is called Nehru-Liaquat Pact. In view of the past experience, no Indian nationalist could have any faith in Pakistan's promises and assurances about good behaviour

towards Hindus left there. Furthermore, this Pact put India and Pakistan on the same pedestal, even though the Muslims in India were being given more than a fair deal by the Indian Government. There was no mention of any compensation for those who had been looted and rooted out, nor was there any guaranty for their future safety in this agreement.

This Pact came as a last straw for Dr. Mukherji who was long thinking of parting company with Pandit Nehru to be able to give vent to his views on the policies being pursued by the Government of India. He therefore decided to resign from the Nehru cabinet and sit in the opposition in the Parliament. He thus became really the first opposition member in the Indian Parliament in April 1950.

But it was clear to him as to any other observer of Indian scene that he must have a political platform outside the Parliament to project his point of view. Hindu Mahasabha was there. Dr. S. P. Mukherji suggested to Hindu Mahasabha leaders that they should open their doors to all Indians, irrespective of their caste and creed and become a really democratic nationalist platform for men like him. This was not acceptable to Hindu Mahasabha. He therefore, decided to create a new political platform. In this endeavour, he got encouragement and willing co-operation from a number of persons including some in the R.S.S., who also felt the need for a party nearer to their basic nationalistic approach and outlook. Shri D. P. Mishra, who had left the Congress after the demise of Sardar Patel in 1950 also lent his hand in the search for such platform.

Explaining the need for Bhartiya Jana Sangh, its first manifesto adopted at the foundation-convention 1951, said:

"India got freedom after long centuries of foreign rule but it has failed to create the expected glow and enthusiasm in the people's minds. The country is suffering from a number of internal and external problems. Old problems are not being solved and new problems are coming up. The people are being ground between the economic and political mismanagement. Production is falling, and black-market and profiteering are flourishing. As a result, there is an atmosphere of disappointment and frustration in the country and people's faith in the

leadership is getting shaky. The ruling Congress party in its haste to make India a carbon-copy of the West is undermining the people's faith in the national values and ideals. The situation needs to be changed. There is need for a new approach and leadership in all walks of national life. BJS is coming into existence to fulfill that need."

The objective, Jana Sangh put before itself at that time was to develop India as a political, social and economic democracy based on Bhartiya Sanskriti and ideals in which every individual will have equality of opportunity and freedom to live his own way of life. To achieve this objective, Jana Sangh laid stress on democratic and constitutional means and condemned all totalitarian and violent methods. It pledged that it will follow only peaceful and constitutional means for the achievements of its objectives.

The broad outlines that it laid down of the Jana Sangh programme at that time have continued to be the sheet anchor of the Jana Sangh's thinking and policies ever since. It laid stress on a pragmatic approach to the economic problems with the aim of achieving the ideal of "Sarvodaya" (welfare of all) in which every Indian might be assured of fulfilment of his minimum needs of food, clothing and shelter; and a nationalist approach to political and international problems particularly arising out of Pakistan's stubborn hostility and emergence of Communist China as a threat from the North.

This approach of the Jana Sangh uninhibited as it was by any foreign ideology of left or right, had a ready appeal for the Indian mind from the very beginning. This was proved by the fact that Jana Sangh was able to get recognition as one of the four major political parties of India on the basis of the results of the first general elections which were held only three months after its inception. It has since been making steady progress, election after election, both in terms of votes polled and seats won. It is now looking forward to the fourth general elections scheduled to be held in February, 1967, with greater confidence and self-assurance. It hopes to emerge as the second biggest party in the country with a commanding position in most of the North Indian States.

II

INTERNATIONAL POLICY

International policy of a country, as is clear from the term "International" itself, is a matter of relationship between a country as such, irrespective of the Government it may have for the time being, with other countries. It is to be determined by national interests and not by the interests of the powers that be. This is particularly true of a democratic country, where different parties may have different views and approaches to the national problems. That is why, in all democratic countries, foreign policy is treated as a bi-partisan or non-partisan affair. To tie it down to the ideological likes and dislikes or whims of any particular individual or group of individuals, who may happen to be in power at any particular time in disregard of wider national interests is indefensible. Jana Sangh therefore, has always stood for a non-partisan, national foreign policy instead of a partisan policy as has been the case in India since freedom.

No country in the world can afford to live in isolation. This is all the more so in the modern world when distance has been almost eliminated by the new means of communications. Every country looks to its own interests which may not be necessarily the same as that of its neighbouring countries. Normally, as Chanakya wrote in his *Artha-shastra* 2300 years ago, there are more chances of clash of interests between two immediate neighbours than between distant neighbours. That is why he wrote that normally every country should take its immediate neighbour to be its enemy and neighbour's neighbour as its friend. But if a country is so strong that it does not care for any other country's friendship or enmity, it may remain "*Udasin*" or "*Tatastha*" or Non-aligned. It may not bother itself to win friends or make allies.

When India became free in 1947, it had the goodwill of all countries of the world excepting Pakistan, which is and will continue to be India's born enemy, so long as it exists in its present form. The only other country which did not have a good word for India at that time was U.S.S.R., whose communist rulers thought that India had not really become free. The natural course for India to follow in regard to foreign policy, therefore, was to strengthen her relations with the countries which were friendly to her and improve her position *vis a vis* Pakistan. It was in her interests to keep out of the cold war that was then raging between U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. and concentrate on her own development. In that context the policy of non-alignment, that India then adopted in respect of U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. had something to commend. But success of such a policy depended upon two things. One, India should not have given the impression that it was leaning on or favouring U.S.A. or U.S.S.R. in the various disputes between them. It demanded some kind of self abnegation in the sense of deliberate silence on issues involving U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. in which India's interests were not directly involved. Secondly India should have built up her economic and military strength at the fastest pace and reduce her dependence on other countries, particularly U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. Unfortunately the architects of Indian foreign policy, while they talked of non-alignment failed to fulfil the above-mentioned two conditions necessary for its success. They leaned more on one side or the other by turns making India suspect in the eyes of both the blocks led by U.S.A. and U.S.S.R.

With the emergence of Communist China as a major military power and her attack on India in 1962, a new situation developed. The Sino-Russian relations which were getting cool for sometime became further strained. The clash of national interest between them began to take the better of their ideological affinity. In due course they developed ideological differences to justify and sustain the clash of their national interests. With the entry of Communist China into the nuclear club, she became a real threat for Russia militarily as well. As a result there began a thaw in the East-West cold war. U.S.A.

and U.S.S.R. developed a vested interest in peace in the face of a common threat from Communist China which began to concentrate more and more on establishing her hegemony over Asia. This made it necessary for her to weaken the position of India which could be a rallying point for the weaker nations of Asia. This provided the real cause for Sino-Indian confrontation which actually began long before the Chinese attack in 1962. In this new situation, which made the world multi-polar in which New Delhi and Peking became two new live poles, the policy of non-alignment adopted by India when she wanted to remain out of Soviet-American conflicts became quite irrelevant and out of date. India could not be non-aligned with herself. It was now for others to decide whether they wanted to be aligned with India or China or remain non-aligned in regard to the conflict between these two Asian giants. There is no sense therefore in India continuing to harp upon non-alignment even now as a cardinal principle. Foreign policy is a policy and not a principle. Bharatiya Jana Sangh therefore considers this continued talk of non-alignment as unnecessary, uncalled for and not in the best interests of the country. Instead Jana Sangh stands for an independent and flexible policy which may help India to gain firm friends and allies against the combined menace of China and Pakistan.

Such an independent policy can be built on two postulates. Firstly, India must deal with every country individually irrespective of the block or blocks to which it may or may not belong. Every country has a right to choose its own friends and allies according to its own assessment of its interests. That should not be a bar on India developing closer relations with any country if it suits her interest. The basis of such bilateral relationship, should be mutuality of interests and reciprocity. No ideological or such other considerations should be allowed to interfere with these basic considerations.

The national interest of a country at a particular time have to be viewed primarily in the light of the attitude of its immediate neighbours towards her. Foreign policy must help in the defence of the country against the neighbour if they happen to be hostile and aggressive as Communist China and Pakistan

are towards India. The search for friends by India has to be made with an eye on this basic reality of the Indian situation.

Viewed in this background, one object of India's independent foreign policy should be to secure the freedom of Tibet and its entry into the United Nations Organisation as an independent State. So long as Tibet remains under Communist Chinese heels, there can be no end to Sino-Indian confrontation. Secondly India's foreign policy should aim at developing closer relations with those countries of South East Asia which are threatened by the Communist Chinese expansionism or whose interests otherwise clash with her. That is why Jana Sangh has been advocating normalisation of relations with Formosa and greatest attention to Thailand, Malaysia, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam and Japan. As things are, they are India's natural allies and friends. Culturally, they are very near to India and with the exception of Japan, their economies are complementary to the Indian economy. That is why we stress that India should look more to the Pacific than to the Atlantic in shaping her foreign policy.

In West Asia, Afghanistan whose interests clash with Pakistan on the question of Pakhtoonistan, can be a natural friend of India. India must extend all possible moral and diplomatic support to her for the liberation of Pakhtoonistan. She must also pay more attention to the revival of pre-Islamic cultural ties between India and Afghanistan.

As regards Israel and the Arab countries, India must adopt a policy of strict reciprocity. As things are, most of the Arab countries have been supporting Pakistan against India. So India must support Israel against them. The U.A.R. claims to be neutral in the conflicts between India and Pakistan and India and China. We would therefore like India to become neutral in U.A.R.'s conflicts with Israel or any other country. Since U.A.R. claims to be a good friend of Pakistan and Communist China, while retaining the friendship of India, Jana Sangh sees no reason why India cannot be a good friend of Israel while retaining the friendship of U.A.R.

A necessary pre-requisite for an independent foreign policy is reduction of India's present dependence on U.S.A. and

U.S.S.R. Both of them have their own interests in India. None of them wants India to emerge as a great power in her own right. Therefore both of them want to preserve and strengthen Pakistan as a counter balance to India. Both of them have exacted heavy price from India for their support to us. U.S.S.R. forced Tashkent Declaration on us and U.S.A. forced devaluation of Indian rupee on us. Therefore while maintaining friendly relations with both U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. as best as possible. Jana Sangh would like India to reduce India's dependence on them at the quickest pace and not lay too much store by any of them. Instead Jana Sangh would strive to develop closer relations with East European and Latin American countries individually on the basis of mutuality of interests. Their growing independence of Russian and American control is a welcome development.

There is no much hope of normalisation of relations between India on the one side and Pakistan and Communist China on the other so long as India remains weak. Both of them are working for disintegration of India individually and collectively with the help of their agents who are collaborating within the country. Any move to appease one or the other with a view to driving a wedge between them would have quite the opposite effect. It will strengthen the alliance by creating the impression that it has paid rich dividends. The only way to normalise the relations with Pakistan is to follow a firm policy of strict reciprocity towards her. So long as the rulers of Pakistan feel that aggression on India pays, they will persist in their aggressive policy towards India.

The same is the case of Communist China. Only a firm policy and sustained effort to liberate Tibet and build up a system of collective security against her in South East Asia will help in normalising the relations with her in the long run.

An independent defence structure is essential for pursuing an independent foreign policy. Therefore Jana Sangh has been laying stress on giving top priority to the defence needs of the country from its very inception. India has all the basic ingredients that go to make the military potential of any country—a large manpower, a great military tradition, a large and grow-

ing industrial base with plenty of raw materials and talent to process them. It is our charge that the Congress Government, because of its misplaced obsession with peace and nonviolence has not paid the attention it should have paid towards the defence of the country. As a result, India has been invaded four times during the last twenty years and has lost 50,000 sq. miles of her territory to Communist China and Pakistan. Even now the attention and priority that defence of the country deserves, is not being given to it. While Pakistan has almost doubled her military strength since the last Indo-Pak war, and Communist China has developed nuclear war heads and missiles, the Government of India is still harping upon Tashkent spirit and is not prepared to develop its own nuclear deterrent.

This has created a real danger of a new attack from Pakistan with the collaboration of Communist China in the near future. Bhartiya Jana Sangh is pledged to increasing the strength of all the three wings of armed forces, development of independent nuclear deterrent and top priority to development of defence industries, so as to make the country self-sufficient in regard to defence equipment. Jana Sangh would like to get assistance in this respect from any quarter to enable India to become a strong and self-reliant military power at the earliest. We are convinced that this can be achieved without much harm to economic development because much of the money spent on defence production and in the form of salaries to the defence personnel, contributes directly or indirectly to the economic development of the country. Much of the development in Punjab, particularly in the agricultural field, is the result of the investment of funds coming to the villages from the jawans serving in the army. Even if increase in expenditure on defence put some strain on economic development, it cannot be neglected because defence is and will always remain the first charge of any Government worth its name. One object of Indian foreign policy should be to draw such countries nearer to India which can help her in developing her defence industries and supply her the military hardware independent of U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. Jana Sangh is confident that with little realism and foresight, this can be achieved.

III

ECONOMIC POLICY

Provision of minimum food, clothing, shelter and medical and educational facilities is the least that the people of India could expect after twenty years of freedom. But they have been sorely disappointed. In spite of the heaviest taxation in the world and stupendous amount of outside help in the form of loans and aid and completion of three five year plans, costing nearly twenty thousand crores, the rate of economic growth in India, according to the U.N. Survey, is the lowest among the developing countries. According to the Congress leader's own admission, the rich have grown richer and the poor have grown poorer as a result of the economic policies pursued by them during this period. Today we are short of food. There is growing unemployment and the prices of necessities of life are rising fast, making the life of the common man miserable. Millions of people of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh are hovering between life and death because of famine conditions created by failure of rains and lack of gainful employment.

It is the considered view of the Jana Sangh, that the main cause of this grave failure on the economic front is the dogmatic and unrealistic economic policies and planning pursued by the Congress Government at the Centre and in the States in the name of socialism. Until and unless these policies are changed and a purely pragmatic approach is adopted in the light of actual realities of the Indian economic situation, there can be no end to the present economic miseries of the Indian people.

India is primarily an agricultural country. More than 70 per cent of its people live on agriculture, from which more than 50 per cent of its national income comes. Backwardness of Indian agriculture in terms of production, size of holdings and

dependence of too many people on it, is therefore the first basic economic problem which must be tackled if Indian economy is to be improved. The second basic economic problem of India is unemployment. We have excess of labour and are short of capital and land. Unless steps are taken to provide gainful employment to the unemployed, the economic conditions of the common people cannot be ameliorated. It is the shortage of purchasing power resulting from lack of gainful employment for crores of people and not the shortage of food and clothing which is the basic problem of Indian economy. The world has shrunk by the elimination of distances and shortages of one country can be met by the surpluses of other countries, provided the people have the necessary purchasing power.

The steady fall in the value of Indian rupee, resulting from the inflationary monetary policy and wasteful and unproductive expenditure coupled with proportionately low production of consumer goods, has created imbalance between the goods and money available in the market resulting in complete upsetting of the price structure, which in its turn is continuously pushing up both the cost of production and the cost of living. A desperate situation has thus developed which demands drastic remedies.

According to the Jana Sangh, the first pre-requisite to regenerate Indian economy is to create the necessary climate and conditions for maximising production, both agricultural and industrial, with indigenous means and methods as far as possible. First there must be wealth to be distributed. There is no sense in the slogan of equitable distribution when there is no wealth, no goods and no food to be distributed. The one effective means of seeing that wealth produced is so distributed that disparities of income are reduced and minimum standard of living is assured to all, is that maximum people contribute to and are made to take part in the work of production and interest is created in them in maximising it. This can be achieved only if dogmatic approach is shunned and a policy of economic liberalism, in which normal laws of economics tempered with a general acceptance of the principal of '*Sarvodaya*', (Welfare

of all) take precedence over dogma, is adopted. Any policy or approach which retards production or puts premium on inefficiency and corruption as has been the case in India so far, where loyalty to dogmatic socialism has been given precedence over the basic postulates, for more efficient and cheaper production is bound to lead to general stagnation of the economy. The efficiency and quantum of production are reduced in direct proportion to external controls and reliance on quotas and permits and licenses in the place of competition. This amounts to putting premium on inefficiency and corruption at the cost of efficiency and honesty. Therefore a general change in economic thinking and reversal of the present dogmatic policies is the primary need of the Indian economy. If the objective of more employment, lower cost of living, better housing and more of basic amenities of life for the vast majority of the people is to be achieved within a reasonable span of time.

Once the objective is clear and there is genuine desire to achieve it, the present controversies about public and private sector will become irrelevant. Actually so much needs to be done and there is such scarcity of capital and enterprise in the country that only a proper co-ordination and understanding between the two is needed. Generally speaking, private enterprise must be allowed to go ahead without unnecessary interference from the state where it can mobilise resources on its own. A general de-licensing of all industries which do not require any foreign exchange and foreign import for getting into production and allowing the normal laws of economics to regulate their quantitative and qualitative growth can go a long way in giving a spurt to industrial production in the country. The state must concentrate on such basic industries and projects as are essential for the defence and general economic development of the country and for which necessary capital is not available or which need to be under the overall control of the state for strategic reasons. Even there the state should seek co-operation of private enterprise in the interest of more efficient and cheaper production. Both private and state enterprise, thus must play complementary roles. Such a mixed economy will constitute the basis of a national economy

in which the private and state enterprise and resources may be put to the best use in the wider good of the largest number of people.

Since the largest number of people consist of consumers and primary producers whose best interests are served by competition, Jana Sangh is opposed to all kinds of monopolistic control of the economy either by some private individual or individuals or by the state. The state must enter the economic field, if it must, only as a competitor governed by normal laws of economics and not as a monopolist. That alone can put an end to inefficiency, corruption and higher cost of production and lower profits in the public sector undertakings. The state with the help of a committee of experts must, however, lay down the priorities and exercise a general superintendence over all production in the interest of balanced and rapid growth.

Agriculture is India's basic industry. It provides living for more than 70 per cent of its people. Its development should have been the first concern of any realistic economic policy for India. But quite the opposite has happened during the last twenty years of Congress rule. As a result this basic industry of the country has languished with adverse repercussions all round.

Agriculture, like all other industries, needs investment. Land to the tiller may be a good vote catching slogan but in actual practice, it has affected food production adversely because the slogan-ridden Congress rulers never seriously tried to provide the necessary investment needed for making the land profitably productive. Rather they drove away whatever sources of investment were available in the villages by wrong policies about banking and rural credit.

Bhartiya Jana Sangh is convinced that agricultural production in India can be maximised only through intensive cultivation. Extensive and mechanical cultivation has a very limited scope in India because of small holding and shortage of cultivable land in proportion to population. Intensive cultivation on small holdings therefore has to be done mainly on traditional lines with proper use of modern know-how and

knowledge.

Provision of cheap and dependable irrigation facilities is the first need of Indian agriculture. So irrigation must have the top priority in terms of investment in land. The world experience as also our own experience in India has fully established the fact of diminishing returns of big irrigation dams. Furthermore they need heavy investment and take long time to complete. But India's need for increased production is immediate and most urgent. Therefore Jana Sangh has been laying stress on small irrigational schemes, particularly, tanks, tube-wells and "Kools". There is enough sub-soil water available throughout North India. Therefore, tube-wells can be cheaply sunk to reduce the dependence of our agriculture on the vagaries of monsoon.

The first task of a realistic agricultural policy, therefore, should have been to reduce dependence of our agriculture on rain for irrigation. The policies pursued by the Congress Government have been a miserable failure in this respect. Provision of cheap electric power for operating tube-wells, which should be sunk on co-operative basis where individual farmer may not be in a position to provide all the investment, can make this means of irrigation, cheaper and more dependable than any other irrigation system. Renovation of old tanks and digging of new tanks for storage of rain water through local effort can also go a long way in this respect.

The second need of Indian agriculture is improved seeds. Provision of better seeds in the quickest way of increasing production without extra effort and investment. The development and supply of improved seeds must be the responsibility of the state, which must utilise institutions of agricultural research and big seed farms for this purpose. Improved seeds with known merits developed in other countries, could also be imported and popularised within the country.

The third need of Indian agriculture is improved implements and better bulls. Better ploughs drawn by stronger bulls can plough deeper and add to the productivity of land. A number of hand-driven implements like drills and sowing machines have been developed in countries like Formosa, where

conditions are similar to that of India. They can and should be introduced in India with proper adaptations. There is a serious shortage of good bulls in the country. It is the better, well-fed cows and bulls, that are being butchered and not the useless and uneconomic cattle. That makes the need for total ban on slaughter of cows and bulls, a pressing economic necessity. At the same time, steps will have to be taken to improve the breed of cows and bulls to make them more economic and prevent the multiplication of useless and uneconomic cattle.

Manure is the fourth need of Indian agriculture. There is enough of green manure in the country but much of this is wasted or used as fuel. This can be prevented by proper education and supply of other kinds of cheaper fuel to the villages. The stress laid on chemical fertilisers by the Government, is both misplaced and harmful. If American experience is any guide, chemical fertilisers, if they are not mixed with green manure in proper proportion and if the land, in which they are put, is not properly irrigated, destroy the fertility of land and make it barren within a few years. India does not have enough land to waste. Therefore the money and energy being invested in setting up chemical fertiliser plants, can be better diverted to meeting the other three top priority needs of Indian agriculture.

Alongside, Jana Sangh wants the cultivators to be assured of remunerative price for food grains to prevent further diversion of land from food crops to cash crops. In fact much of the land now under sugar-cane cultivation can be brought back to food crops if improved irrigation facilities are provided. Indian sugar-cane production per acre is lowest in the world. The same quantity of sugar-cane can be produced from nearly half the land, if sugar-cane fields are properly irrigated and manured. This can be best achieved by making it compulsory for sugar factories to adopt some of the neighbouring villages for the purpose of provision of irrigation and other facilities for improved cultivation of sugar-cane. This should be treated as a part of the investment on the factory and would do good all round.

Incentives in the form of remission of land revenue and

cash prizes should also be offered for producing more from the same acreage of land.

Above all there is need for changing the mental outlook of the Indian cultivator, particularly, in the Eastern part of the country. He has become too fatalistic and has no ambition to improve his lot. This can best be achieved by planting some more progressive and hard working cultivators amidst them.

These are the only possible ways of maximising production in the shortest time in India. Mechanised agriculture on the western model has little scope in India for the present because of small holdings and general economic backwardness of the Indian cultivators. But there should be no dogmatic opposition to development of bigger and mechanised farms wherever possible through private or state effort.

The balance in the growth of industry and agriculture can be achieved only if alternative employment can be assured to those who need to be diverted from agriculture to other fields of economic activity. This can be achieved only if greater attention is paid to small scale and agro-industries. Concentration of industries in few big industrial centres and general neglect of rural based industries must go. There is, for example, a big scope for dairy industry in India. It can provide subsidiary income to a large section of rural population. But little attention has been paid to it so far. Agriculture, itself is growing industry provided production can be diversified and processing industries can be spread over the country side. India has a vast and sheltered internal market. There is no reason why this market cannot be supplied through labour-intensive small-scale industries.

Jana Sangh's approach to economic problems is not inhibited any ism of left or right. It therefore has a pragmatic approach to the question of nationalisation as well. The experience of nationalisation has not been very happy in India so far. The state-run industries and projects are generally more inefficient and costly and therefore they have become a drag on the economy. They tend to be monopolistic because they cannot stand competition. As a result, the interests of consumer,

producer and the tax-payer suffer. Even otherwise the increasing control of economic life by the Government in the name of nationalisation is bringing the living of more and more people under the control of the Government which means in effect the party in power. Since independent thinking pre-supposes independent living, the grip of the Government on the economic life of the people, is stifling the voice of opposition and creating conditions favourable for a one-party totalitarian state. Therefore it is the considered view of the Jana Sangh that indiscriminate nationalisation must stop and that the Government must consolidate and improve the existing nationalised industries instead of turning to others. The decision, whether an industry should be nationalised or not should not be taken on political or ideological grounds. It should be done only on the recommendation of an independent tribunal. General welfare of the people rather than ideological or political interest should be the guiding consideration. As a rule, private individuals or corporations should be allowed to function without constant threat of nationalisation which should be the exception under compelling circumstances.

But in certain sectors of industry such as major public utility services like railways and defence industries, public control is preferable to private control.

There is much scope for the expansion of banking in India. Nationalisation of all banking will only retard the process of expansion. It would be neither in the interest of the employers nor in the best interest of the economy as such. Jana Sangh is therefore opposed to nationalisation of banking but would welcome opening of new branches by the State Bank or private banks. It would also like the depositors to be given representation on the Board of Directors of private banks to watch the interests of depositors and prevent misuse of power by directors holding controlling shares.

As regards oil companies, Jana Sangh would like the foreign companies to be Indianised rather than nationalised. Healthy competition rather than monopoly should be the guiding principle. The present foreign domination on the oil companies functioning in India can and will be minimised even

without complete nationalisation.

This is even more true of iron and steel industry. Jana Sangh sees no reason why the private and public owned steel industries should not be allowed to exist in healthy competition for the greater good of the Indian economy.

Indians today are the most heavily taxed people in the world. Taxes have been levied during the last fifteen years by different authorities without any proper analysis of the country's fiscal structure. There are a number of taxes, though levied by different governments, which fall either on the same commodity or the same class of people. This has adversely affected both prices and capital formation. Jana Sangh proposes to appoint a Taxation Enquiry Commission to examine the present taxes, to provide relief to the tax payer and recommend a united fiscal structure keeping in view the needs of the state and objectives of the economic development and social justice.

A major defect of the present taxation system is that it has put premium on dishonesty and tax-evasion. Since the rate of taxation is very high, there is general tendency to evade them. Those who happen to be honest, find their position difficult as compared to their dishonest compatriots. The corruption in the administration has made tax evasion a profitable business both for the assessors and the assesseees. If tax collection could be made more efficient and honest, there can be much more income from less taxes. There are examples like that of Udaipur Municipal Corporation, where Jana Sangh has turned a deficit budget into a surplus budget even after abolition of House-tax and Cycle-tax only by more efficient and honest collection of octroi and other municipal taxes. The same thing can be repeated on the national level if Jan Sangh is voted to power.

IV

SOCIAL POLICY

Right of education is one of the basic social rights of man. It is the education, which gives the man a sense of identification with society and help him to develop his personality. Education must enable an individual not only to earn his living but also to become a responsible member of the society. Along with literary and book-knowledge, education must develop character. This can be possible only when education is correlated with national culture and values of life. There is urgent need for modernisation and Indianisation of education system.

The educational reforms undertaken by the Government since freedom have mainly touched the secondary and university education. The primary education, which provides the base on which the edifice of education stands, has remained neglected. The primary school and the primary school teacher are the most neglected and uncared for all over the country. The schools lack buildings, furniture and even teachers. The salaries of the primary school teachers, in many states are even lower than those of peons and constables. As a result the children coming out of primary schools, often find themselves unable to cope with the demands of English-dominated secondary school education. This is the main cause of the falling educational standards of which so much is heard these days.

Because of this plight of primary education in Government and municipal schools, most well-to-do parents in towns, have begun to send their children to privately managed schools, many of which start with English medium from the very beginning. The students coming out of such schools, generally do better at the secondary and university stage too. Thus two separate new classes are being created among the new generation.

Jana Sangh would give top priority to improvement in the system of primary education. A uniform pattern of primary education through the mother tongue needs to be evolved and status of the primary teacher needs to be improved. Jana Sangh is pledged to improvement in the service conditions of primary teachers and a minimum monthly pay of Rs. 150 for them. The conditions of primary schools will be improved so that the students coming out of them may be able to compete favourably with students coming from private schools. Efforts will be made to make provision for compulsory and free primary education for all upto the age of 11 as provided in the directive principles of the Constitution within the next five years.

The higher secondary education should prepare the students for entry into all institutions of higher education both liberal and technical. It should be the basic degree for entry into public and private service. That would end the present craze for college education just for the sake of getting the degree, which has become the essential passport for entry into Government and private service. This should reduce the present rush for admissions into colleges and universities. While encouraging selective admission through liberal stipends for all promising students passing Higher Secondary Examination, efforts will be made to provide opportunities for higher education to all those boys and girls, who want to pursue it for whatever reasons. It is not necessary that all such boys and girls must necessarily join the recognised colleges. Provision will be made for them to take the examination as private or non-collegiate students.

More attention will be paid to opening institutions of technical and professional education. The present lack of proportion between the arts colleges and science and technical colleges needs to be set right. The technical and professional education will have greater claim over the resources of the state earmarked for education

Absence of moral and national content in the educational curricula, is a basic flaw in the present system of education, which was imposed on us by the British to create clerks and a class of mental slaves, who should run their administration and serve as their henchmen in India. The system was con-

demned by all Congress leaders without exception before freedom. But since freedom, they have developed a new love for this outdated system of education like everything English. The continued imposition of English on the young boys has made the situation worse. Whatever little moral content in educational curricula had been before freedom, has since been voted in the name of secularism and Indian nationalism has been reduced to idolatrous praise of Pandit Nehru and Maulana Azad, the two architects of our educational system since freedom. One was more Arab and the other was more an Englishman than Indian. This situation demands radical change. Jana Sangh stands for making the education an instrument for imbibing in the new generation a strong sense of nationalism and patriotism and a burning faith in the Indian ideals and values of life. This can be achieved by making the study of books like *Hitopadesh* compulsory in all schools and greater attention to national history and national heroes. The continued teaching of British history to the exclusion of history of our Asian neighbours and stress on the periods of foreign rule to the exclusion of long periods of national self-rule, has created a lopsided picture of Indian history and achievements in the minds of Indian boys. This is making the new generation rootless and therefore vulnerable to all kinds of unhealthy influences. These defects of the educational system will be removed and steps will be taken to make it suit the needs of free India.

Jana Sangh stands for a uniform educational policy in the whole country and therefore is in favour of including education in the concurrent list. It considers money spent on education as a contribution to the overall development of the country because tempo and quality of development, in any country depends largely upon the quality of the people working for such development.

Jana Sangh is in favour of compulsory military training for all students above the age of 20 years and would seek to create a sense of dignity of labour among the youth through utilisation of services of the youth for the development-work of all kinds during the period of their compulsory military training. The

Indian student is second to none in intelligence but he lacks the spirit of adventure and a national fervour. Education must create both these essential qualities in the Indian youth, to make them fit instrument for the leap forward in all respects.

Quite a large number of talented Indian scientists and technicians have been going abroad or stay there after completing their education because of lack of proper opportunities and research facilities in India. Many of them are really keen to return to the country and serve the motherland. Jana Sangh will try to get them back into the country and utilise their services for scientific and technological advance at a quicker pace.

The continued imposition of English on our students is another cause of falling educational standards. Too much stress on English results in neglect of Indian languages. As a result the students generally cannot master even their own language. This is a crime against the new generation in the country. English can be taught at the college stage as an optional subject as one of the more important foreign languages, but it can not be allowed to be the medium of instruction at any stage.

It is wrong to say that India's scientific and technical progress would be checked without English. The truth is quite the opposite. There is no reason why Indian students cannot be given instructions in all subjects through the Indian languages which have the rich store house of Sanskrit to fall back upon for new words. Jana Sangh stands for the immediate appointment of a committee of experts drawn from all the Indian languages to prepare a dictionary for technical words, drawn from the existing words in different languages or from Sanskrit. These technical terms should be compulsorily used in the text books written in all Indian languages. These coupled with compulsory knowledge of Hindi as the national language of the country, will provide the basis for intellectual intercourse between different linguistic regions of the country. Hindi in fact is already the *lingua franca* of the country in spite of all the propaganda of vested interests to disprove it.

India is a poor country. Its common people can ill afford the costly allopathic medicines. That is why the allopathic

doctors avoid settling in the rural areas. Ayurvedic system of medicine is more suited to the Indian conditions. Ayurvedic medicines are both cheap and within the reach of the people.

Jana Sangh therefore stands for giving greater attention to Ayurveda as a national system of medicines along with the allopathic system. Actually what India needs is some kind of mixing the two systems because both have their own strong points. Therefore any dogmatic approach in this respect would be avoided. Standardisation of Ayurvedic medicines and provision of proper status and emoluments for Ayurvedic doctors can go a long way to end the present craze for being recognised as allopathic doctors by even those who knew little about allopathy. Special steps in the form of provision of housing and other minimum amenities will be taken to encourage the medical men to settle in villages to meet the medical needs of the people there.

The existence of different castes, communities and languages is a reality of the Indian life, which no one can ignore. They cannot be wiped out. The people have their loyalty to caste, religion and linguistic groups. There is nothing wrong in it provided such loyalties are not allowed to take the better of the overall loyalty to the country and the nation. This can be achieved by strengthening Indian nationalism and emphasising the factors of unity. Only such a positive approach can strengthen the Indian unity. The Congress approach in this respect has been emphasising the dividing factors and quite the opposite. To serve its partisan ends, it has been encouraging casteism, communalism and linguism in different parts of the country and different sections of the society. That is why Congress has become the most communal organisation in the country. Communalism and casteism have become its mainstay in the elections. It has been deliberately encouraging separatism among the religious minorities and keeping them out of the national current to maintain its monopoly of their votes. Its failure to extend the common civil code to the muslims, whose women need its protection most, is a clear proof of the communal thinking of the Congress Party. Jana Sangh on the other hand, in keeping with the Indian culture, stands

for unity in diversity. Indian culture has never stood for conformism in regard to religious or other aspects of a man's life. It has always stood for freedom of thought and freedom of worship.

"The Rigvedic injunction "स एको सद् विप्राः बहुधा वदन्ति"

"God is one. The wise men call Him by different names" is the quintessence of Indian philosophy and culture. It has pervaded Indian thinking all through the ages and is the basis of Indian toleration and Indian secularism. Jana Sangh stands for it. Indian or Hindu State in fact has always been a secular state and never a theocratic state. Too much talk of secularism by Congress is therefore mischievous. It amounts to insulting the Indian culture and the Indian people who are the most secular people of the world in their outlook and behaviour. Even rulers like Shivaji and Ranjit Singh, who fought all their lives against Muslim fanaticism, never made any distinction between their Hindu and Muslim subjects after they succeeded in establishment of their Hindu states in the teeth of Muslim opposition. So secularism is as old as Hindu culture and so long as that culture prevails in India, India will be a secular state. The only sure way to strengthen Indian secularism is to strengthen the roots of Indian culture.

As said above Jana Sangh stands for due place being given to Indian languages all of which are our national languages with Hindi and Sanskrit as links between all of them. English is a foreign language imposed on us by colonial rulers. It can not be allowed to continue its present domination of the educational, administrative and economic life of the country. It will of course remain the most important foreign language in India for a long time to come. As and when regional languages take their own rightful place in their own respective regions, Hindi will automatically become a link language between all of them. For ceremonial purposes, Sanskrit should be used all over the country.

Jana Sangh wants to discourage drinking and therefore is in general agreement with the principle underlying prohibition. But the way it is being implemented is not correct. It has only

helped the bootleggers and corrupt officials at the cost of the tax payers. Therefore there is need for basic rethinking on this question. So long as the men in power drink in private and preach prohibition in public there can be no real check on drinking, which is essentially a social problem.

The same is true of family planning. We are in full agreement with the principle underlying it but see no justification for the way it is being done. There is need for rethinking on this question as well.

V

POLITICAL POLICY

Democracy is not new to India. The participation of the people in running of their administration through representative bodies like Sabha and Samiti was an accepted principle of Indian state-craft as early as Rigveda. Republican states flourished here side by side with monarchical states for thousands of years. Lord Krishna, Gautam Buddha and many other great leaders of thought and action came from Republican states. Freedom of thought and toleration for other man's point of view has been the hallmark of Indian culture, which has never stood by conformism of any type. The present form of democracy based on British model, may be new to India but not the spirit behind it.

India still lives in the villages. The rural population forms the backbone of the country. Democracy to be successful must be strengthened at the grass roots.

Indian villages have enjoyed and worked successfully grass root democracy for ages past. The village panchayats in India were so powerful and effective till the middle of last century that Sir Charles Metcalf, Governor of North Western Province (now Uttar Pradesh) said in 1853 that every village in his Province was a Republic in miniature.

This grass root democracy of India was destroyed by the British, particularly, after the War of Independence of 1857. The village panchayats began to be revived in some of the Indian states like Baroda early in the present century. The makers of Indian Constitution realised the importance of village democracy in the democratic edifice that they proposed to build in India and therefore enjoined upon the would be governments of India to establish Panchayati Raj in the villages by incorporating it in the Directive Principles of the Constitution.

But the experience of Panchayati Raj as established by the Congress Government during the last twenty years, is not very

happy. The main cause of it is that Panchayats are sought to be made a medium of Congress propaganda and influence rather than of developing and strengthening democracy. The power of the Panchayats are strictly limited and their sources are uncertain. The system of election by simple majority has accentuated the caste rivalries in the villages and panchayats are getting under the control of dominating castes to the exclusion of all others. This has reduced both their efficiency and respect. The same is more or less true of town arca committee, and municipalities. The State Governments supersede them at will whenever they find that opposition has got the majority in them.

This situation needs to be changed if democracy at the village and town level is to be strengthened. Jana Sangh is of the view that village panchayats and town committees should not be left at the sweet mercy of the State Governments. Their powers, functions, tenure and mode of election should be laid down in the constitution itself, for which purpose the constitution should be amended. It is essential for the success of village democracy that some method of unanimous election of Panchs be devised, so that the real village elders may get elected to the Panchayats and give them the respect and dignity that they deserve. That alone will ensure more active and intelligent participation of the vast majority of our people in the democratic process.

Efficiency of the administration very much depends upon the leadership of those in the Government. Human factor is the ultimate factor in this as in other matters. The one major cause of the falling standard of efficiency in the administration is lack of integrity in the Ministers and too much interference by ruling party members in the day to day administration. The mixing of Government and State by the powers that be, has reduced administration to the position of an agency of the ruling party. This will have to be ended. Care will have to be taken to see that the Ministers can command the confidence and respect of the administrators because of their work and efficiency and not simply because of their office and the civil servants are allowed to carry out their duties without unneces-

sary and partisan pressures and influences. This is absolutely essential to improve the efficiency and tone up administration. At the same time machinery has to be devised through which the inefficient and corrupt officials could be brought to book speedily and honest and efficient officials could be encouraged. As things are, there is premium on inefficiency and dishonesty in the administration as well. The honest and efficient officers, who are not prepared to carry out the behests of the party bosses, find all roads to progress blocked for them. Jana Sangh would take positive and effective steps to end this mix-up of the Party and Government and devise a machinery to spot and punish the inefficient and corrupt officials.

Jan Sangh considers India to be one country and not just a 'Union of States'. We would therefore like to amend Article I of the Constitution and give it a unitary structure at the centre. The States will be delegated enough powers but there would be clear understanding that they would draw their power from the centre and not the other way round. We would also like to amend the Constitution to give an independent position to Panchayats and other local bodies.

We are not opposed to the principle of linguistic states provided the language alone is not made the main basis of the states reorganisation. The considerations of development and national defence need also be given due weight in this matter. There is bound to be some overlapping in the linguistic sense in any demarcation of states on linguistic basis. So long as the basic fact of unity of the country is accepted, we see no reason why any state or states should make an issue of such overlappings. No formula can completely eliminate the existence of people and villages of one language group in the border areas of the neighbouring linguistic states. Such linguistic minorities should be granted all the rights given to them in the Constitution. At the same time a permanent boundary commission should be set up to tackle any disputes as and when they arise and its recommendations should be treated as an award and not tampered with by the executive authority for political and partisan reasons.

Regional Chauvinism is the direct result of over emphasis

on the linguistic principle in the reorganisation of states. The general undermining of the Indian nationalism by the Congress leaders during the last twenty years of their rule has also encouraged separatism and parochial feelings in different regions. The steady weakening of the centre is another cause. The only effective way to minimise regional Chauvinism is to strengthen the forces of integration and unity, and projection of Indian nationalism through stress on national culture, national history and national heroes in a uniform way all over the country. At the same time no special treatment should be given to any region as is being done in the case of Kashmir. Faithful implementation of the recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission in regard to posting of officers and judges from different states and establishment of central universities with Hindi as medium and more extensive exchange of students and teachers between different regions can also help in strengthening the sense of overall unity and weakening regional Chauvinism.

Indian students by and large are intelligent, well behaved and disciplined. The general crisis of character and indiscipline in the country is having its effect on them too. The dirty example of those who have been put in power in the name of democracy, has corroded the respect that Indian youth had for their elders and leaders. Artificial barriers preventing them from taking part in democratic politics of the country and voicing their feelings and aspirations in a legitimate way has created a sense of isolation in them. The absence of moral and national content in the educational curriculum and the domination of English are sapping their cultural roots and making them a class apart which has little in common with the common people of the country and which cannot compete with anglicised upper class boys who have the benefit of better English education. The general economic distress and spectre of unemployment after finishing the studies is tending to make them desperate and irresponsible. The resultant discontent of Indian students has been finding expression in so many ways in recent times. The Communists and such other elements in Indian body politic, who have little faith in democracy and who want

to create an atmosphere of violence and anarchy in the country, to bring about a violent change to establish a totalitarian regime of their own conception have been trying to make use of the students too for this end, through their agents, working among the students. General mass of Indian students has nothing to do with the violent activities provoked and engineered by such elements. No democratic political party can afford to encourage spirit of violence in the country.

The only effective way to check violence by or through the students is to spot the few trouble makers and their patrons in the Communist and its allied parties and take firm action against them. At the same time machinery should be devised through which students might be able to voice their genuine difficulties and grievances and have dialogue with the men in authority regarding matters of common concern.

The Bandh politics is also a part of the tactics being adopted by such parties to create an atmosphere of violence and anarchy in the country. But if the experience of Calcutta is any guide, it has boomeranged on them politically. While Jana Sangh upholds the democratic rights of peaceful demonstrations and strikes in support of legitimate demands and has been making use of such democratic methods of voicing public opinion with effect, it is completely opposed to injection of violence in such demonstrations and strikes. Strikes must not be forced on any unwilling section of the community through hooliganism and such other undemocratic methods.

Why PSP?

by N. G. Goray

And

Surendranath Dwivedy

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The task of organising democratic socialist forces in India has been in progress for the last three decades. During this period, the organisational framework as well as ideological foundations of the party of democratic socialism changed but the urge to evolve a democratic way of life and build an egalitarian society remained throughout the guiding spirit of the Socialist movement. The organisational evolution of the party of socialism passing through the successive phases of the Congress Socialist Party, Socialist Party and Praja Socialist Party was accompanied by corresponding evolution of socialist policies and perspectives.

The democratic socialist movement in India did not grow in isolation from the main stream of our national life but it emerged as an integral part of the freedom struggle against British Imperialism. This was reflected in the birth of the Congress Socialist Party in 1934 which in essence was the forerunner of the existing Praja Socialist Party. The Congress Socialist Party was formed with the primary object of radicalising politics and spreading socialist thought in the country while remaining in the folds of the Congress, which at that time was the spearhead of the freedom struggle against foreign domination. The Party strived to put socialist content in the Congress.

Ideological Foundations

In the earlier stages, Marxian influence on the Party was dominant. But as the years rolled and the harrowing tales of Stalin's dictatorship in Communist Russia came to light the party seriously tried to reassess and re-examine the foundations

of Marxian ideology and Communist strategy and tactics. This process was accelerated by the anti-national role played by the Communists in our freedom struggle, particularly in 1942.

In the intervening period of the World War II the Party re-examined the basic postulates of Marxian thought, discovered the futility of united fronts and alliances with anti-democratic forces like the Communists and at the same time tried to assimilate in its own ideology some of the significant contributions of Gandhian thought without getting entangled with the irrational and unscientific tenets of Gandhian ideology. Marx had predicted that a socialist revolution would take place in economically advanced countries at the stage of higher industrial development. In reality the revolution broke out in a backward country like Russia in 1917. Again Marxism had enunciated the 'Law of Pauperisation and Increasing Miseries' according to which Marx had predicted that as industrial development proceeded there would be increasing pauperisation of the middle class. The facts were to the contrary. With the industrial development the middle classes grew in number as well as in stature. The absolute 'economic determinism' propounded by Marx considered economic factor as the sole determining factor in the development of society. History of social development had however revealed that besides economic factor human will and democratic traditions in a country were also the factors to be reckoned with in the development of a society.

In the initial phases of the Party Gandhiji exerted little impact on socialist thinking and actions. However, after the World War II which represented a period of intense self-analysis by the Socialists, Gandhiji's teachings were re-evaluated on the background of the Communist and Socialist Movements the world over and in the context of the peculiar problems that confronted India. The present ideological foundations of the Praja Socialist Party now bear a distinct stamp of some of the important contributions of Gandhiji. The methodology of peaceful mass struggles, correlationship between end and means, growing need for devolution of political power and decentralisation of economy to avoid totalitarianism were some

of the salient features of Gandhian thought that were assimilated by the Party, in its socialist thinking.

Consolidation and Fragmentation

The socialist movement led by the party for the last three decades has passed through phases of consolidation, as well as fragmentation marked by mergers and splits. In the initial stages of the party the distinctive face of the organisation quite distinct from the Communists guided by Marxian ideology was not evolved. As a result, a number of Communists had infiltrated in the party not to strengthen it but to disrupt it from within. As the policy of the party regarding the anti-democratic role of the Communists got clarified and refined, the Communists and their fellow-travellers quit the Party and at some places as in the South particularly they inflicted considerable damage on the Party. However, this was preferable to the chronic trouble they would have fomented from within the organisation.

With the achievement of our national independence the political map of the country has basically changed. Socialists had remained within the Congress in the pre-independence period because they considered the Congress at the time as a broad anti-imperialist front of the freedom fighters accommodating within its folds varying ideological trends. With the emergence of free India there was obviously no need for such a heterogeneous front. What was needed then was the formation of political parties based on sharply defined ideologies, programmes and class-interests. Gandhiji's advice to Congressmen to dissolve the Congress after the achievement of freedom was quite logical. However, those who controlled the power in the Congress did not want such a powerful machine to be liquidated but wanted it to be harnessed for the perpetuation of their own power and strength. The Socialists in the Congress organised under the banner of the Socialist Party had therefore no alternative but to quit the Congress. Thus emerged an independent 'Socialist Party' in 1948, committed to a programme of Socialist Reconstruction.

SP-KMPP Merger

The results of the first General Elections of 1952 set into motion a process of realignment of political forces and consequent political consolidation. As a step towards ending avoidable political fragmentation the Socialist Party and the Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party led by Acharya Kripalani resolved to unite to form the Praja Socialist Party. The merger agreement emphasised loyalty to nationalism, democracy and social change and also accepted peaceful form of class struggle as an instrument to fight against injustice in a society torn by class distinctions and caste stratifications. The main inspiration of the earlier socialist ideology flowed from the Marxian thought but at a later stage it was not unaffected by Gandhian social philosophy. The KMPP was basically Gandhian in social outlook. However, it was not entirely uninfluenced by the Socialist thought of the West. Under these conditions the process of fusion of both the parties was accelerated. After the merger of the Socialist Party and the KMPP, the Forward Bloc (Subhasist) also resolved to join the PSP and thus radical nationalist tendency once spearheaded by the late Netaji Subhas Bose also got integrated with the PSP.

After the formation of the Praja Socialist Party, at the instance of the late Prime Minister Shri Jawaharlal Nehru Shri Jayprakash Narayan met him and during the Nehru-Jayprakash talks efforts were made to explore the possibility of co-operation at both governmental and people's level in the interest of nation-building activity. The talks failed because of Shri Nehru's refusal to commit himself to a commonly agreed time-bound radical programme.

A special convention of the PSP was held at Betul in 1953 on the background of the failure of the Nehru-Jayprakash talks. At this convention Shri Asoka Mehta, the General Secretary of the Party, presented a political report which sparked off a stormy debate on his thesis of 'Political Compulsions of Backward Economy'. The general feeling in the Party was that the thesis presented by Shri Mehta was symptomatic of the

crisis of self-confidence and lack of will to build a powerful Socialist opposition that would ultimately replace Congress as its alternative. In his thesis, Shri Mehta contended that "stagnation versus disruption threatened often enough to become the fundamental alternatives to the detriment of the forces of democratic social change". According to him compulsions of backward economy tend to push towards totalitarianism or timidity. Shri Mehta held the view that the dilemma could be resolved by (1) so broadbasing the government that it gets power to move forward because opposition is driven to the fringes and (2) strengthening the forces of pluralism in authority and in initiative.

Shri Mehta's thesis lacked realistic understanding of the nature of the Congress Party which was not interested in pursuing radical socialist policies but was merely wedded to the implementation of the policies of a welfare state. The Congress was not interested in fruitful co-operation on socialist terms not to speak of broad-basing the government with commitment to a radical programme. Shri Asoka Mehta failed to realise that a vigorous and vigilant socialist opposition could never be a barrier in planned economic development of the country. The thesis of Shri Mehta was not adopted at any stage by the Praja Socialist Party but it continued to haunt the Party till Shri Asoka Mehta parted company with the PSP.

Socialists split

After the Betul Convention of the Praja Socialist Party internal strife continued in the organisation. While the Party as a whole was committed to a vigorous opposition to the Congress, a section of the Party led by Shri Asoka Mehta always felt suffocated by this policy. At the first formal conference of the PSP held at Allahabad a draft of the Policy Statement which emphasised the role of the Party as a vigorous opposition to the Congress was adopted unanimously. However, in spite of this unanimity the Party hardly experienced any smooth sailing after this conference. Police firing in Kerala under the minority PSP Ministry in the State rocked the Party.

Dr. Rammanohar Lohia, who was the General Secretary of the PSP at that time, demanded resignation of the PSP Ministry whereas the National Executive of the Party publicly tendered apology to the people of India for the police firing in Kerala and assured the nation that in the future, the PSP Government in Kerala would handle the problem of law and order on a more humane and democratic way. The resolution was endorsed by a special conference of the Party held at Nagpur in November, 1954 by a sharp division of 303 against 217 votes. The issue was settled democratically but the cleavage continued to widen.

After the Awadi resolution of the Congress Party on Socialism internal dissensions of the PSP got publicly exposed and open defiance of the Party discipline at the hands of a few party workers became the order of the day. This led to a chain of disciplinary actions including the one against Dr. Rammanohar Lohia and ultimately the Party was broken into two fragments: the major section functioned as the PSP and the smaller section worked as the Socialist Party. Thus what was gained by the merger of the Socialist Party and the KMPP was to some extent negated by this new split. However, undeterred by the split the PSP continued to work vigorously and both at the national as well as international level the PSP continued to receive recognition as the accredited party of democratic socialism in the country.

Principles versus Personality

At the National Conference of the PSP held at Bhopal in 1963 the Party decided to refine and sharpen its image as a party of democratic socialism by discarding alliances with anti-national, anti-democratic and anti-socialist forces. The Party decided to offer a determined opposition to the Congress and also demanded the resignation of the Nehru Cabinet for its failure to defend the country against the Chinese aggression and to streamline the economy so as to ensure the optimum utilisation of the resources for the nation's defence and to usher in economic equality.

A few months after these firm decisions at the Bhopal conference a new controversy raised its head in the PSP when Shri Asoka Mehta, while continuing his membership of the PSP, decided to accept the Deputy Chairmanship of the Planning Commission. The National Executive of the PSP considered this action of Shri Asoka Mehta as a calculated step to trigger the process of Congress-PSP consolidation. Remaining loyal to the spirit of earlier decision of the PSP taken at the Bhopal conference to offer uncompromising opposition to the Congress, the National Executive of the PSP repudiated Shri Asoka Mehta's action and ultimately on his refusal to resign from the Party terminated his membership of the PSP.

At a great risk, the PSP demonstrated that it valued principles and policies more than personalities. The Party did not hesitate to sacrifice its former Chairman at the altar of the principles. Shri Asoka Mehta later on joined the Congress along with some of his followers. This vindicated the contention of the National Executive of the PSP that Shri Mehta's acceptance of the Deputy Chairmanship of the Planning Commission was an action to trigger the process of the Congress-PSP consolidation. The split precipitated did result in some damage to the PSP but by and large Shri Asoka Mehta failed in weaning away the ranks of the PSP and his colleagues in the leadership. The firm attitude of the PSP led to the realignment of political forces. The wavering elements in the PSP who had a lurking sympathy for the Congress left the fold of the PSP along with Shri Asoka Mehta to join the ruling party. On the other hand, the process of unification of the PSP and the Socialist Party was hastened. Initially the Socialist Party had insisted on the acceptance of its election manifesto as the basis of merger of the PSP and the Socialist Party. However, at a later stage they agreed to effect the merger of the two parties without any pre-conditions leading to the formation of the Samyukta Socialist Party in June 1964.

Break at Foundation Conference

The unconditional merger of the PSP and the Socialist Party

could have been a success if both the parties had discussed and debated in a cool way important political problems and had hammered out the policy and strategy of the united party. However, the leading members of the Socialist Party misused this unity to push forward their political line of alliances with other opposition parties including the Communists. On the floor of the Parliament in total disregard of the Party in the House and its leader the M.P.s belonging to the former Socialist Party undermined dignity and decorum in the House. Factionalism in the united party became rampant and personality cult built round Dr. Rammanohar Lohia was deliberately fostered. On this background the very foundation conference of the Samyukta Socialist Party held at the end of January 1965 at Banaras turned out to be the dissolution conference of the SSP. The overwhelming majority of the PSP delegates who attended the foundation conference met in a separate convention and decided to annul the merger and revive the PSP as a genuine instrument of democratic socialism pledged to offer vigorous opposition to the Congress without getting entangled in anti-democratic and anti-socialist alliances. In most of the States, with the exception of Uttar Pradesh and Kerala, overwhelming majority of the former PSP legislators continued to remain with the PSP and in Parliament as well almost all the former PSP members continued their membership of the PSP that was reorganised. It is on the basis of these facts that the Election Commission restored the election symbol "Hut" to the Praja Socialist Party. This decision of the Election Commission was challenged by the SSP in the Supreme Court. However, the decision of the Supreme Court went in favour of the PSP and thus the Party received the seal of approval from the highest judiciary in the country. In terms of numerical strength this new split did mean some set back to the party but in terms of its effectiveness as a disciplined party devoted to the cause of socialism the PSP did gain something. It acquired more homogeneity and achieved a community of outlook. For the correct understanding of the history of the PSP and the vicissitudes through which it has passed, it is necessary to realise the sociological and economic implications of various mergers as well as

splits that have occurred in the socialist movement from time to time.

Unlike the parties of status quo, the parties of social change especially in underdeveloped countries like India have to experience stresses and strains in their constant search for realignment of forces in the task of building socialism. The situation becomes all the more complex when such parties are pledged to democratic means. The reorganised PSP will face the coming General Elections as a party with a distinctive socialist image unblurred by opportunistic alliances with anti-national and anti-socialist forces.

II

FOREIGN POLICY

The Praja Socialist Party stands for an independent foreign policy whose pivot would be the interests of our nation. These very interests demand that India should pursue a policy of non-alignment in international sphere. However, non-alignment by itself cannot be a positive concept. It must mean something more than passive neutrality in international conflicts. A third bloc of non-aligned Asian and other nations can provide a positive and concrete alternative to the negativist concept of non-alignment. This idea of Third Bloc did find favour with the late Shri Jawaharlal Nehru in the pre-independence period. However, after the achievement of freedom, in our anxiety not to disturb the super powers and in our wishful thinking of acquiring the status of a big Power, our government did not seriously pursue the idea of sponsoring a Third Bloc. The late Indonesian Socialist leader, Mr. Sjahrir, had canvassed the idea to Shri Nehru on a number of occasions beginning from the Asian Conference of 1947. However, the Prime Minister of India did not respond favourably to Mr. Sjahrir's suggestion. Mr. Sukarno who succeeded Mr. Sjahrir in Indonesia also failed to realise the significance of the concept of Third Bloc. The recent experiences gained by both India as well as Indonesia should make both the countries re-examine the basic tenets of their foreign policy and take steps in the direction of sponsoring the idea of the Third Bloc.

Changes overlooked

One of the greatest blunders committed by the late Shri Jawaharlal Nehru has been his presumption that a particular balance of forces which had emerged after the World War II would

sustain for a long time. These calculations proved to be incorrect and inspite of our refusal to get involved in power conflicts India faced growing isolation, especially after the Chinese aggression and the Indo-Pak conflict. In our efforts to ensure friendship with all we seem to have incurred the wrath of many. In our international relationships we have overlooked the fact that long term friendships are possible only amongst equals and that these relationships have to be flexible in the context of changing situation.

In the past few years, a process of approximation was developing between the positions of the two super Powers. The allies of these Powers were becoming a little more independent from them. Western Europe, as it stabilized its economy and as the *detente* seemed to become permanent,* wanted first to assert collectively, and failing to do, has been asserting singly and severally. The role of France is particularly well known. In fact after 1958 she had started on an independent road. China's foreign policy, too, had shown signs of departure from the two bloc compulsion as early as 1956. However, the leaders of the Indian Government failed to grasp the import of these changes on the world scene. On the contrary they rest content by imagining that these changes were a direct consequence of their efforts. As a result, India failed to develop our independent links with other countries. As regards China, till as late as the massive aggression we had convinced ourselves that our friendship with the Soviet Union was the best guarantee against a possible Chinese thrust. Again, our fond hope that friendship between India and the U.S. developed after Chinese aggression would ward off the danger of the Pakistani aggression was also belied. Thus for the security of national frontiers and for our territorial integrity, we relied on, firstly, a balance of forces which was transient and secondly, on the two super Powers who we thought would restrain our enemies from attacking us. It was this illusion of inviolability that lulled us into complacency and a stupor from which we have not yet arisen. If we had, we would not have imposed on ourselves a restriction that we shall never develop the atom bomb.

Spirit of Non-alignment

The Praja Socialist Party does not consider non-alignment merely as a moral attitude in the present international power conflict. Non-alignment has its practical implications. It eschews military alliances with big Powers and involvement in the clashes of the conflicting power blocs. If the policy of genuine non-alignment is implemented vigorously the minimum advantage that can be derived from such a policy is that India can be kept out of the orbit of the cold war between the big Powers and can get breathing space to build up its own independent foreign policy and stabilise her economy. However, such a policy of non-alignment cannot mean refusal to judge international events on their own merits. The tragedy of our non-alignment policy is that under the garb of non-alignment our Government shows emotional alignment with one of the power blocs. For instance, when people of Hungary, among them peasants, workers and students, rose in revolt in defence of freedom and democracy, spokesmen of India failed to respond to their urge for freedom, from the highest forum of the United Nations. The rape of the freedom fighters of Hungary by the Russian tanks and machine guns resulting in the massacre of more than 40 thousand Hungarians failed to stir the conscience of our Government. Under the pretext of non-alignment we refused to throw our moral weight on the side of the freedom fighters. This is certainly not the spirit of non-alignment. Non-alignment can never mean neutrality in a struggle between aggressors and freedom fighters. For instance, India's willingness to accept aid from any quarters in defence of her freedom and sovereignty from Chinese or Pakistani aggression cannot be construed as a violation of non-alignment. It is in this context that the PSP, while remaining true to the spirit of non-alignment did not refuse to raise its voice against the murder of Tibetan freedom by Communist China, England's aggression on Egypt in collusion with France and Israel, America's intrusion in Lebanon and Russia's aggression on Hungary struggling for her freedom.

While our Government eloquently talks about non-alignment it very often succumbs to the pressures of big Powers. Before proceeding to Tashkent Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, as the Prime Minister of India, had given a solemn assurance that whatever be the pressures from big Powers, India would never surrender the strategic posts of Haji Pir and Kargil to the Pakistanis. However, under the joint pressure of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. India accepted the Tashkent Declaration and handed over to the Pakistani aggressors Haji Pir and Kargil, the posts that were captured through precious sacrifices of our jawans. Our Government bowed to the pressures of the World Bank and the U.S. in devaluing our rupee. In our anxiety to win the questionable support of the Arab world we alienated the sympathies of a progressive nation like Israel. Singapore and Malaysia have given full support to India. But we have failed to make adequately friendly gestures to them.

Rudderless Policy

In all this—in our relationship of weakness with the super powers, of aloofness from all the other important powers of western and eastern Europe, of moral arrogance with our neighbours to the East and South, and in our failure to defend our borders—onc hardly finds a sense of direction. We have failed to define our vital interests and have not perceived that a large country like ours cannot but be jostled around unless she is strong enough to assert herself.

The facile assumption that the two super Powers would like to strengthen India which is non-aligned politically and democratic socialist ideologically, is sought to be propped up under the plea that both the U.S. and the Soviet Union wish to contain China and, therefore, they would support India. All this is make-believe. In fact, with the loosening of the bloc system, multiple alliances are coming into being. Pakistan has shown that she could draw support from the U.S., Russia and China. Pakistan is not friendly to India. China has been winning friends in Western Europe. But even these developments have not made us any wiser. It is this refusal to learn from

experience and to achieve a flexibility which would allow for quick adjustments which has bogged us. Our initiative is grossly limited.

A New Threat

The Praja Socialist Party feels concerned, on the one hand, over the growing collusion between Pakistan and China and China's fast developing nuclear armoury, and on the other, over the tendency among Western and West Asian nations and the U.S.S.R. to equate Pakistan and India so far as international affairs and financial aid are concerned. The ill will that Pakistan Government bears towards India knows no limits and it is now established beyond doubt that Pakistan is training and arming the Naga and Mizo commandos to subvert law and order in the eastern-most regions of India. Taking these and other ominous developments into consideration the Praja Socialist Party has reasons to believe that a day would soon come when the entire arch stretching from the Rann of Kutch to the Mizo Hills would be turned into a war front by a combination of those hostile and traitorous forces. Against such a contingency India must provide for herself by striving for self-sufficiency in every branch of weaponry, conventional as well as nuclear, and by inculcating in the people a new sense of urgency, discipline and nationalism. Millions of young men and women in the urban and rural areas must be mobilised and trained for defence. Pakistan should be warned that India will not hesitate if necessary to pursue Naga and Mizo rebels right into Pakistan territory and to destroy their hide-outs and their training camps.

India must learn to draw the correct conclusion from the fact that while the big nuclear powers loudly denounce the Chinese nuclear blasts, they are still continuing their own underground tests and have started showing new respect for China. As the gap between China and India grows *pari pasu* would increase the power vacuum in the Afro-Asian world, and India will have to lean more and more heavily on one or the other foreign power, a consumption that would spell ruin to all our cherished dreams.

Atom for Defence

Foreign policy of a country is closely linked up with its defence policy. Only a strong nation capable of defending her territorial integrity can ward off threats of aggression and can ensure friendly relations with her neighbours. The explosion of an atom bomb by China on October 16, 1964 followed by further nuclear tests, calls for reorientation of India's defence policy and particularly our approach to the problem of the manufacture of atom bomb.

The Chinese communists are not at all apologetic in the defence of their atom bomb explosion. 'Power grows out of the barrel of a gun' is the guiding philosophy of Communist China. 'Strength grows from the fission of the nucleus' is the logical extension of this philosophy. Communist China is not worried about destruction on her side in the event of a nuclear holocaust. That is the reason why the leaders of Communist China callously claim that even if three hundred million Chinese were to be destroyed in a nuclear holocaust, other three hundred millions would survive to conquer the world. India must realise that she has across her borders such a fanatic and determined enemy. Our attitude towards the manufacture of the atom bomb must necessarily be governed by an adequate understanding of the enemy that threatens our sovereignty and our way of life.

During the debate on the question of the manufacture of the atom bomb in India, the cost of the bomb has occupied a pivotal position. The late Dr. H. J. Bhabha, one of the authorities in India on the technical and scientific aspects of the atom bomb, had quoted statistics given in a paper read at the Third International Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy organized by the United Nations at Geneva in September 1964. On the basis of these figures, Dr. Bhabha had estimated a cost of about Rs. 10 crores for stockpile of 50 atom bombs and Rs. 15 crores for a stockpile of 50 two-megaton hydrogen bombs. It is argued that if India's resources are diverted to the manufacture of the atom bomb, the economy of the country will be

badly hit and the working people in the country will face untold miseries. It is therefore contended that any thought about the manufacture of the atom bomb must be brushed aside to prevent our economy from total collapse.

Cost of the Bomb

The protagonists of this point of view overlook the fact that the expenditure incurred in the manufacture of the atom bomb is not necessarily diverted for destructive weapons alone. Atomic energy can be harnessed for constructive purposes like excavation for water diversion, irrigation or flood control, for construction of canals and harbours, for blasting passages through mountains for highways and railroads, for industrial development and also in the field of medicine. There are quite a good number of stages common to both the processes of harnessing atomic energy for peaceful purposes and of manufacturing the atom bomb. A part of the expenditure incurred in the manufacture of the atom bomb would, therefore, be useful even for evolving a nuclear technology for constructive purposes. In the present debate, this aspect of the problem is completely neglected and the issue framed is as to whether we want to build our economy for peace or for war. To the PSP, the controversy—'Atom for peace or for war'—is irrelevant in the present context. What is needed in the existing situation is harnessing the atom both for peaceful development as well as for the manufacture of nuclear weapons as a deterrent to the aggressors who threaten our freedom and sovereignty.

There is a section of opinion that rejects the manufacture of atom bomb as a deterrent and in the alternative suggests a clear treaty alliance against China with those Powers of the world who are ranged against communist nations. With this end in view a plea is made for a total reversal of the policy of non-alignment. This point of view flows logically from the constant desire of certain sections to line up with the Western Bloc in the present power conflict. Such permanent alliances are bound to rob our nation of independence in international affairs and also drag India into the vortex of the cold war.

Those who are enamoured of 'nuclear umbrellas' from the West must never forget that history records ample evidence to show that umbrellas from outside are rarely imported without strings and even when umbrellas are available there is no adequate guarantee that they would open out at the right moment.

Army's Morale

The question of manufacturing the atom bomb must be viewed in the context of our defence preparedness. On this background, the problem of the morale of the Indian Army acquires great significance. The Jawans who are defending our northern borders are not operating in a vacuum. The strategy of the Chinese Communists and the developments on their military front do affect the Indian Army as well. While the Chinese Communists callously talk about allowing even half of their population to be destroyed in a nuclear holocaust, the personnel of the Indian Army defending our northern borders is bound to ask a question as to what is our deterrent to China's aggressive postures? If the only reply to this is that we believe in world peace and the messages of Gandhi and Buddha, the morale of the Army cannot be built up. If adequate steps are not taken to raise the morale of the Army, at least efforts should not be made to demoralise the Jawans.

Defence of Egalitarian Society

If our nation resolves to manufacture the atom bomb as a deterrent, it must guard against certain likely anti-democratic developments. If we review the progress of the stockpiling of atom bombs, we find that the production of nuclear weapons is undertaken effectively and efficiently either by prosperous countries like the U.S. or totalitarian countries like Russia and now China, which can force the new burdens on the people through a regimented economic life. Such conditions do not exist in India and, therefore, the task of manufacturing a nuclear deterrent can be undertaken only by mobilising the neces-

sary public opinion. This is a test of our democracy and we must stand by it.

If the nation's will is paralysed by the deadening influence of poverty, misery and social and economic inequality, the people's apathy towards problems of defence will grow. The task of a radical transformation of our society and the ushering in of an egalitarian order is therefore as important to it as the manufacture of a nuclear deterrent. Our soldiers on the front must feel enthused that what they are defending is not merely a geographic entity but a democratic and egalitarian society. In this context, determined efforts to strengthen the forces of socialism and democracy in the country assume vital importance.

Nations are not defended without tears. If the atom bomb is to be manufactured as a deterrent against aggressive China, this also cannot be done without tears. The nation will have to pay the price. This may entail more hardships on the people. However, there is no short cut to the defence of the nation's freedom. The nation will be prepared to pay the price if it is assured that the Government is determined to implement a bold and firm China policy. If the tallest of the tall tell the nation that 'we will negotiate with China and negotiate to the bitter end,' the nation cannot be expected to bear the burdens of the manufacture of the atom bomb. Thus, apart from political considerations, even for a defence psychology, an urgent re-hauling of the China policy is called for. If the Government re-orientes its China policy with a more dynamic approach, the nation can be galvanised to give the requisite sweat, toil and tears for the manufacture of the nuclear bomb as a guarantee against Chinese onslaught on our freedom.

Relaxation of Tensions

How can India's relations with China and Pakistan be normalised and the existing tensions relaxed is a question that haunts the minds of our statesmen. The Praja Socialist Party believes that no short-term and piece-meal solutions will be able to ensure normalisation of these relations. The late Prime Minister, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri with best of intentions of re-

laxing the tensions between India and Pakistan signed the Tashkent Declaration. Did the declaration provide any basis in reality for the normalisation of relationship between India and Pakistan? The PSP had characterised the Tashkent Declaration as an insipid document that would never ward off the threat of aggression by Pakistan. The post-Tashkent Declaration developments have only vindicated the stand taken by the PSP. Soon after the signing of the Tashkent Declaration, President Ayub Khan made it explicitly clear that the declaration did not mean a 'non-war pact' between India and Pakistan. He interpreted the Tashkent Declaration as a mere reiteration of the U. N. Charter and emphatically stated that so long as amicable solution was not found to the Kashmir issue preparations for war could not be avoided. On January 14, 1966 he clarified the position of Pakistan in the following words :

"Responsibility of maintaining peace under the U. N. Charter means that nations should not resort to the use of force so long as avenues of peace remained open. We also told the Indian Prime Minister that peace could be maintained only if the issue of Kashmir was settled in a reasonable manner. We also explained that if the issue was not settled both the countries would continue to make war preparations."

According to the Tashkent Declaration, India and Pakistan had agreed not to interfere in the internal affairs of the two countries. However, Pakistan's interpretation of this clause is most disturbing. On January 13, 1966 a spokesman of Pakistan has given the following interpretation in this connection:

"The article referring to non-interference did not apply to Kashmir because it was a disputed territory and not an internal affair of India."

Again the clause of the Tashkent Declaration referring to the withdrawal of all the armed personnel to the positions held prior to 5th August, 1965 is according to the Pakistani spokesman not applicable to the Pakistani infiltrators in Kashmir, because according to Pakistan they were not the infiltrators but freedom fighters.

There is again a section of political opinion which pleads

for negotiations with China to settle the Sino-Indian border dispute and to restore friendly relations between the two countries. The PSP does not consider such a step as desirable. China is not concerned so much with the settling of its claims for the territory on our northern frontiers. Her main objective is to see that India's democratic way of life and a democratic form of government are challenged and disrupted. A strong and stable democracy in India is considered by China as a menace to her growth and expansion in Asian countries. China is therefore primarily interested in keeping pressures on our borders under some pretext or other. On this background any compromise between India and China is not going to deter China from adopting aggressive postures towards India. The only alternative therefore left open to India is to build a strong nation internally and explore all avenues for fortifying her defence.

III

ECONOMIC POLICY

The present economic crisis in India is the outcome of the disastrous economic policies pursued by the Government for the past nineteen years. The crisis is marked by widening disparity in incomes, declining living standards of the working people, further depressed by rising prices and inequitous taxes, growing unemployment, scarcity of food and other commodities and deteriorating foreign exchange position. Devaluation of the rupee is an index of our economic bankruptcy and a clear admission on the part of the Government of the deepening of the economic crisis in India. Unless a rigorous discipline is introduced in our economy, devaluation of the rupee effected in June 1966 is likely to be a precursor to a further devaluation. For the re-generation of our economy to ensure adequate food, more employment, lowering of the cost of living, better and cheap housing and growing economic equality the entire perspective of planning and development will have to be radically reoriented.

Perspective of Development

The Praja Socialist Party believes in a planned economic development of the country. If economic planning is to be the instrument of ushering in democratic socialist society, the emphasis of planning must be primarily at the base and not at the apex. District administration which is close to the people and has democratic foundations has to be the principal unit of economic planning. Under its directions, integrated land reforms will be implemented as time-bound programmes. It will be closely connected with development plans so that there is effective co-ordination between land reforms and reorganisation. Credit and technical assistance will proceed hand in hand. Credit will be governed by the needs as well as by the expanding capacity to use, not by status and property. In giving assistance rehabilitation of the neglected and down-trodden sections

of the society will be the primary consideration. In developmental activities panchayats will play a significant role. They will be the organs of service and authority.

The Party will lay special emphasis on regional development and planning will be so oriented that there is full utilisation of special resources, aptitudes and opportunities in different regions. In locating State and aided industrial enterprises, the present imbalance between various regions will be corrected. While concentration of ownership in agriculture, industry and commerce will be prevented, every encouragement will be given to small and medium enterprises. The nationalised sector will subserve the needs of the public and of co-operative producers. While the Party believes in the nationalisation of all basic and key industries the phased programme of nationalisation will start with those industries where capital tends to accumulate. Even in the nationalised sector, to avoid the danger of over-centralisation and bureaucratisation, autonomous corporations with adequate representation to technicians and workers on boards of management will be set up to run the nationalised industries. The Praja Socialist Party believes in the application of science for the rationalisation and modernisation of industries and their management and also of agriculture. However, rationalisation will have to be without tears. In the present stage of our development the production techniques will have to be labour-intensive and not capital-intensive but as the tempo of development grows, and higher employment potential created, advance techniques in certain sectors of the economy may have to be adopted.

The problems of planning and development will be tackled in such a way that the country will move in the direction of a developing and self-generating economy so that there is a gradual disappearance of our dependence on foreign aid.

Lack of adequate capital is the main hurdle in the path of development. Private savings have so far failed to supply the necessary capital. We have therefore to lean more and more on institutional savings. Credit institutions thus form the main source of capital accumulation and whosoever controls these determine the pattern of economic development. Nation-

alisation of banking and general insurance thus assumes great significance and the Praja Socialist Party will have to effect it without any delay.

The Praja Socialist Party will encourage co-operation in the field of agriculture and industry as an institutional basis to socialist reconstruction. With a view to ensuring efficiency, economy and better production, the PSP will encourage competition among industries in co-operative and nationalised sectors. The public sector enterprises will be reorganised so as to serve as an effective instrument of democratic socialism.

As the tempo of industrialisation has grown, urbanisation has created in its wake, problems like slums, shooting up of land prices, huge industrial townships without provision of representative local bodies and deteriorating hygienical conditions. In the general perspective of development all these problems must receive proper attention and must be tackled in a co-ordinated manner through urban renewal. Planned townships will be developed and the Rent Control Act will be enforced strictly. Unless drastic steps like freezing of land prices are adopted problem of housing cannot be solved satisfactorily.

Food for All

In the absence of an integrated food policy the food situation in the country has become extremely acute. The spectre of famine and scarcity haunts the lives of common people. To ensure adequate food for all effective steps are needed to augment food production, ensure its equitable distribution and through an integrated and coordinated price policy make the food and other essential commodities available at fair prices. The Praja Socialist Party will seek to fulfil these objectives through reforms in agriculture. The Party will suitably revise the existing land laws so as to bring about equitable distribution of land and make the tiller of the land its owner. The Party will abolish land revenue and replace it by agricultural income-tax and will ensure stoppage of all evictions and will provide incentive to the peasant to produce more food.

The peasant will be assured of remunerative price for his

agricultural produce at the very commencement of the sowing season and it will be made incumbent upon rich peasants to sell a fixed percentage of their surplus produce to the accredited government agency. All facilities in respect of seeds, fertilisers, pesticides, storage and credit, will be extended to the peasant. Irrigation water will be made available free to the Kisan in the newly irrigated areas for three years for producing food crops and there will be no fresh increase in water charges in the old areas. Only when adequate steps are taken to channelise the water to the fields, would irrigation yield optimum results. Cultivable areas under the control of the Defence Ministry, the Railway Ministry and the Forest Department will be leased for cultivation from year to year; preference will be given to existing lease holders.

A land army* will be mobilised through State efforts. The Party will encourage co-operative farming on such reclaimed and released lands and will concentrate on consolidation of holdings in other areas. The Party rejects the concept of establishing joint stock companies in the field of agriculture.

Purchase and procurement of food will be undertaken by the Government and effective rationing will be introduced to cover cities and vast masses comprising landless peasants, workers and lower middle class. The depressed and Adivasi communities will not be left to the tender mercies of the open market. A net-work of fair-price shops will be set up. The prevailing zonal system which breeds smuggling and corruption will be abolished forthwith and the whole country will be treated as one unit.

Sales tax on food will be abolished and crop and cattle insurance will be introduced. In order to accelerate the pace of rural development steps will be taken to create an agro-industrial base.

All efforts to tackle food problem are likely to flounder on the rock of growing population. The PSP will, therefore, encourage effective steps for family planning.

The spiralling of prices of food and other essential commodities during the Third Plan period and even after the devaluation of the rupee despite Government's assurances to the

contrary has broken the back of the common man. The piecemeal palliatives of partial controls in some fields and of establishment of "super bazars" in big cities have exposed the weak-kneed policy of the Government. The mounting prices are a direct consequence of the absence of an integral price policy. The market price of essential commodities particularly of industrial goods has no relevance to the cost of production and businessmen's exorbitant profits and heavy taxes on essential commodities have aggravated the situation.

The Praja Socialist Party will establish a definite relationship between the cost of production and the market price of commodities by eliminating the middleman and by replacing him wherever possible by co-operatives, by suitable revision of tax structure, by socialising wholesale trade in foodgrains and other essential commodities and by bringing foreign trade under State control. The agriculturist will be assured of a remunerative price for his produce and a balance will be introduced between the agricultural prices and those of industrial goods.

Crusade against Unemployment

Though the planners in the country had assured wider opportunities for employment, in reality the backlog of employment in urban as well as rural areas has increased at a rapid pace. The PSP's firm conviction is that work is the fundamental right of man, it is the supreme badge of citizenship.

At a time when labour intensive techniques must receive priority in India, the Government has followed the policy of putting emphasis on cottage industries on one hand, and rationalisation and automation in some fields on the other, without creating higher employment potential. The PSP will place greater emphasis on cottage industries, agro-industrial and labour intensive techniques both in the rural and urban sectors of the economy so that condition of fuller employment is created in the near future.

The district development programme would embrace village plans whose main purpose would be the full use of labour, land and water resources. The district plans will offer opportunities

of gainful employment to every person. Through co-ordinated work projects, untapped resources and idle hands will be brought together in fruitful co-operation. The Government's principal responsibility is to foster and facilitate these production programmes.

The promise of work for all can be implemented only in a phased way. A beginning will be made in selected areas where weaker sections of society like Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Classes predominate.

By providing the needed inducements and incentives the holders of dwarf holdings will be invited into co-operatives. Pooling of resources and implements will precede pooling of land. On reclaimed lands and such surplus land as becomes available the landless will find work and home and land.

Through rural re-development projects, rural housing will be improved. Villages will not only be rebuilt, with varied community facilities, but urgent attention will be given to housing the landless and the socially depressed. These development activities will fully exploit local resources, reconstruct economical and social life on the basis of full employment. It will be the responsibility of planning not just to assure full employment but also help, through diffusion of skills and provision of improved tools and credit, to raise the technical level of production. The administrative and economic organ of the development and change will be the Panchayat and co-operative working as a united entity.

Taxation

In a developing economy taxation occupies an important position. The nation has to bear the burden of development. The increased defence-budget after the Chinese and Pakistani aggressions has added to the complexity of the problem. It must however be realised that people cannot be enthused to bear the heavy burdens of taxation when there is a complete lack of the spirit of equality of sacrifices. For years the tax structure in our country has remained most inequitous. For instance in the year 1944-45 the direct taxes whose incidence falls on the richer

sections were to the tune of Rs. 193 crores. By 1959-60 these taxes were increased only to Rs. 201 crores. On the other hand indirect taxes whose burden falls on the poor were Rs. 150 crores in 1944-45 and by 1959-60 these taxes were increased to Rs. 854 crores. With such gross inequality in the tax structure how can the common man be enthused to bear increasing burden of our development? When there is a growing concentration of wealth as revealed by the Mahalanobis Report and the Monopolies Enquiry Commission Report, efforts must be made to bring to the coffers of the Government treasury money from the richer sections through adequate taxation. Besides other forms of taxes, imposition of a Capital Levy on property beyond a suitable limit would go a long way in destroying the tapering peaks of property in the country. Tax evasion has become one of the biggest hurdles in the implementation of the taxation policy. It is estimated that the evasion of taxes by the richer sections is to the tune of Rs. 300 crores per year. If the Government decides to take stern measures against these tax-evaders tax collections can considerably go up. The only barrier is this close liaison between the administration and the big business. Unless this is broken up tax evasion can never be checked effectively.

Abolition of fabulous privy purses, and avoidance of extravagance and waste in the administration would further augment the resources of the Government.

In the post-devaluation period, the economy of the country must be better disciplined. In this context nationalisation of banking and insurance, import and export trade, wholesale trade in foodgrains and basic industries assumes great importance.

IV

APPROACH TO SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Education

The system of education has to be in consonance with the needs of a developing democratic society. The PSP favours a complete reorientation of the existing educational system so as to forge closer links of education with life. The true role of an educational institution in society is to instruct the alumni in the art of living intelligently, decently and tastefully and in the art of organising all social, political and economic institutions so that it is possible for people to live that way. Education is a process of cultivation which develops, firstly, the perceptions, secondly the intelligence, thirdly the emotions and finally the actions of human beings. If men are rightly educated their perceptions and experiences do not deceive them, their reason and intelligence is not misused by them, their emotions and impulses are not uncontrolled and their will does not permit them to act abnormally. These functions of education must be borne in mind in any scheme for the reform of the educational system.

A complete revision of the present syllabus will have to be undertaken so that alumni would be liberated from the stranglehold of outmoded social customs and beliefs. While the PSP does not wish to inject chauvinism and militarism among youth, it emphasises the need of developing in them through more systematic NCC training, voluntary work camps and training in democratic citizenship a sense of discipline and national service. To foster a spirit of modernism among the students, education will be science-oriented. More avenues for technical and vocational courses will be provided so as to suit the growing needs of industry and commerce. In the absence of such inadequate opportunities a large number of students not

interested in pursuing university education join the colleges merely as a routine and also add to the problem of overcrowding in the universities. Everyone who has the desire and aptitude to take to university education must not be denied that opportunity but at the same time if one's preference is for vocational and technical courses he must have full opportunities for this type of training. With a view to ensuring learning while earning a more systematic scheme of correspondence courses will be introduced. For this purpose the AIR will be pressed into service to run the "University on the AIR" on the lines of the scheme adopted by the British Labour Party.

To improve the quality of education efforts will be made to change suitably the student-teacher ratio. The sanctity of the autonomy of education will be respected so that Government's interference in the university and other educational institutions is avoided and these institutions will be prevented from becoming pawns in the hand of power politicians. The terms and conditions of service of all teachers from the primary to the university stage will be improved with a view to attracting competent and idealist persons to the teaching profession.

A phased programme will be undertaken to impart free education to all students upto the school-leaving stage. No student who completes his university studies will be awarded his degree unless he puts in for a specified period some social service such as removal of illiteracy. Serious efforts will be made to ensure uniformity in the conditions of the schools conducted by various agencies and differentiations in schools which create a privileged section of the student community in a class-ridden society will be abolished. A scheme for free and compulsory primary education will be implemented in the shortest span of time.

Thus in the field of education a climate of equality of opportunities will pervade which will be highly conducive to the developing democratic socialist society.

People's Health

It is customary to measure a nation's progress in terms of

production statistics. The man, the producer of goods and the very basis of society, and his health and physical and moral well-being are often forgotten in the race for fulfilling and over-fulfilling production targets. Health is the first requisite of civilized life. Our nation will have to go a long way before we shall be able to provide a moderately good health to the millions living in towns and villages. They must also have a certain amount of social security. A small beginning has been made in the case of industrial workers. It must be expanded to cover all sections of the population keeping in view the ultimate goal of a cradle-to-grave security. The existing Employees' State Insurance Scheme will have to be overhauled, its scope widened and its implementation made more effective.

The Praja Socialist Party had set up a panel of doctors to study the problems of people's health and hygiene and suggest ways and means to tackle them satisfactorily. The panel has suggested following concrete steps which may go a long way in ensuring better health and welfare of millions :

- 1) A comprehensive survey of people's needs for hospitals and beds classified in terms of acute, chronic, geriatric, maternity, tuberculosis, mental etc.
- 2) Proper dispersal of these institutions to correct the present imbalance with emphasis on setting more institutions, and adequate provision for their future expansion.
- 3) Better designing and construction with a view to providing quicker services, and better communication between different specialities.
- 4) All future hospitals to be community or locality hospitals to cater to a given locality irrespective of caste, creed or linguistic groups. The local community be associated in some capacity with the running of the hospitals and collecting finances.
- 5) Setting up of a hospital authority representing the medical profession, local bodies, Health Ministry and citizens

to supervise the running of the existing hospitals, to modernise, better equip and expand them, and to plan new ones on the basis of the principles suggested.

6) Intimate association of the general practitioners in the locality to which the hospital caters with the hospital and free access to the diagnostic facilities; a two-way traffic of information between the consultant and the general practitioner.

7) To reduce the work load on the hospital consultants in the outpatients department only referred cases to be handled by them, the rest that is direct patients to be examined by the permanent staff of the hospital in the evening outdoors. •

8) Preventive care, domicilliary help to the sick, after care of the discharged patients, maternity and child welfare and health education to be hospital centred; local authority, government and various welfare boards to co-operate in such a venture.

9) Integration of the general practice with the overall plans of the community medical care. Cheap loans to the practitioners to equip, expand and renovate the dispensaries. Reservation of floor space for the dispensaries in the new constructions after survey of the local need. Compulsory preventive services to be rendered by the practitioners so provided.

10) To encourage general practitioners to form social groups or clubs on the basis of a 'division' of a locality (a) to develop forms of co-operative work (b) to organise better preventive and curative treatment for the community (c) to improve their knowledge (d) to set up a co-operative diagnostic centre (e) to provide by rotation night call and week-end services to the community.

11) To encourage and educate the general practitioners

to take up trained technician-cum-secretaries to maintain better contact with the patients, fellow practitioners and hospitals to keep records and to maintain for their patients a card giving the details of the health status, immunity status and drug or other sensitivities.

12) Tax relief as an incentive towards renovations of the dispensaries and of secretarial help to the extent of one and a half times the actual expenses for five years.

Secularism

Indian society has suffered for a long time from the evils of social stragnation and economic decay. The two factors have been interacting on each other and they have created an atmosphere in which forces of secularism are weakened. The caste, communal and regional tensions have further aggravated the situation. There is no short term solution of the problem. The process of strengthening secularism and secular democracy will have to be a prolonged process that needs patience. Effective implementation of schemes for economic amelioration of the people, strengthening forces of rationalism through constant education of the people and by providing equality of opportunities to the weaker sections of the community can the challenge to secularism be met. Time has come when political parties must evolve a code of conduct through common agreement and eschew exploitation of caste, communal and regional differences for ulterior political ends. In this respect the ruling Congress Party which is the greatest culprit must set the pace. It is a tragic spectacle to find that the democratic method of elections is fast becoming a divisive force to drive a wedge between various castes and communities. Very often minorities, and in particular Muslims, are exhorted to support the Congress under the plea that their interests remain secure under the Congress rule. In fact, it is basically wrong to appeal to any community as a whole to extend its support to one particular party. The political loyalties must cut across communal and regional distinctions. Again some of the issues like the lo-

cation of refineries which ought to be tackled on the basis of some well-defined uniform principles are handled in a manner that foment regional tensions and consequent agitations which again cause severe strains on secularism. The failure of the government to fix up firm principles for the reorganisation of the status and then apply them to different regions uniformly without fear and favour has resulted in a number of agitations which has adversely affected forces of secularism and integration. In this respect the greatest responsibility falls on the shoulders of the ruling party. Only with the spread of education and through the efforts to undertake radical economic measures can the situation be changed appreciably.

Prohibition

Prohibition has been enforced in some states through legislation. It is not introduced all over the country. However, wherever prohibition is in force the experiences are most ghastly. Besides heavy loss of revenue to the coffers of the government treasury, the implementation of prohibition has only resulted in colossal corruption and increased crime tendency. A dark under-world is built which is the den for all anti-social activities. The illicit distillation which is the direct outcome of the existing Prohibition policy is not merely a source of crime-tendency but a serious threat to the health and hygiene of the people. If prohibition were to result in saving poorer sections of the society from the evils of liquor and the consequent ruin of their families, it could have been construed as a commendable social reform. However, in reality the remedy has been proved to be worse than the disease itself. When implementation of legislation precedes the moulding of public opinion such are the consequences. In the light of the experiences it is desirable that prohibition be scrapped and be replaced by some form of temperance.

Family Planning

The figures of the 1961 census have given a rude shock to

the framers of the Third Five Year Plan. The population was expected to rise by about 5 crores. The actual increase of 8 crores however, has upset the National Development programme. The following figures about the increase in our population are staggering :

years	increase in population (in crores)
1921-31	2.7
1931-41	3.7
1941-51	4.4
1951-61	8.1

If no effective steps are taken to control the population we might easily expect an increase of 15 crores during the next ten years. This steeply accelerated rate of increase in population is mainly due to the effective control of malaria, and other epidemics. While death control has thus brought down the death rate to 19 per 1000, the birth rate remains practically constant and twice as high at the present moment.

Planned parenthood is now accepted and various schemes of propaganda and for giving practical advice are at work. The main emphasis of the programme is in the establishment of family planning centres and on the provision of contraceptives at these centres. As a long range programme this is useful but as regards achieving immediate and lasting results it is not very effective. This is so mainly because the living conditions of our masses are so deplorable that the use of contraceptives is well nigh impossible. Besides the personnel which is chosen to man these centres especially in rural areas seldom belong to the locality and fail to gain confidence of the local population. The government must make it a point to train the local "Dais" in the art of giving advice on contraceptives and offer them partial employment. This will go a long way in making the idea of family planning acceptable to the masses because these Dais are elderly women who are respected and trusted by the local population.

As regards popularising the idea of planned parenthood the entire staff of the Public Health Department and that of the Community Development Blocks needs to be properly

oriented in the subject. Another very important section of the community which could deliver the goods is the teacher community, both in primary and secondary schools. They come in close contact with the parents and guardians of those they teach and can effectively point out the benefits of planned families to them at the psychological moment.

Until such time a cheap and simple contraceptive is not found voluntary sterilization is the only effective method in controlling inordinate growth of our country's population. For this purpose mobile surgical units should be sanctioned in every state and a post-sterilization man from the working or farming classes should be appointed in every Unit to assist propaganda. Such men should also be employed in each Development Bloc to advocate advantages of family limitation by sterilization. The conditions of age and education will have to be waived in their cases as such men would necessarily be over 35 years.

Language Problem

The language problem is one which must be handled with utmost care because it touches people's susceptibilities. In solving the language problem it must be remembered that language can be both a unifying force as well as a divisive factor depending upon the manner in which it is handled. In the pre-independence period the British rulers used English language as a medium through which administrative unity of the country was achieved to some extent. In the field of university education also English language served as unifying force. Appropriate lesson will have to be drawn from this historical fact. In free India "Rashtrabhasha" (National Language) will have to play the role played by English in the pre-independence period. However, the form of the Rashtrabhasha must evolve itself to the life of the people. Since Hindi is spoken by the largest number of people in the country in some form it will acquire the status of national language. However, if this language is to acquire that status no section of the population should feel that it is being imposed upon them. In this connection the constructive suggestion made by late Acharya Narendra Dev

is most valuable. He had suggested that to soften the antagonism in the South towards Hindi language, the Northern states should encourage study of some language of the South.

Psychologically there is bound to be a reciprocation of this gesture by people in the Southern states. However, in the modern world we must maintain our liaison with international commerce of ideas. For this purpose our nation must maintain its contact with the English language as well.

It is desirable that the administration of various states including the work in the state legislatures be conducted in regional languages and inter-state communication and communication with the centre be carried on in the Rashtrabhasha and in the intervening period in English.

In tackling the language problem the PSP will be guided more by positive efforts like the spread of national language and the adequate recognition and status to regional languages and not by negative campaigns like "Angreji Hatao" (Banish English) or "Banish Hindi". In the long run it is only these positive efforts free from hatred that will succeed in solving the complex language problem.

POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE

People's Participation

If democracy is to be strengthened at the grass-root level it is imperative that as large a number of peasants as possible are associated with the administrative machinery. This necessitates the reorganisation of agricultural administration, on the basis of the 'Four Pillar' state. The principle behind this concept is that the commonality of state is to be organised and sovereign power so diffused that each little community in it lives the way of life it chooses. The village panchayats will thus have pivotal position in the new set up. Above the panchayats, there will be three layers of administrative bodies; regional, state and union.

The panchayats shall be elected on the basis of universal suffrage by a village or a group of villages. They will tabulate the resources of the village and assess their productive potential. They will prepare a crop plan for their village and send it to the higher organs of the planning commission. Through constant references, a thorough exchange of information and ideas between the different echelons of planning, the plan will be finalised. Once the schedule is fixed the village panchayat will see that the targets are realised. They will be responsible for collection of state revenue and other dues and procurement of agricultural produce. It would be the duty and privilege of village panchayats to represent the community in all matters affecting village polity and economy. They would be the main local agency for execution of various programmes of the government affecting vitally the welfare of the villagers, and would represent the government in all activities in the village. They must have control over village sites, charitable and other communal properties. The village panchayat will

thus be the tap-root of the functioning of democracy in which people's participation will be ensured.

Over the village panchayats there will be regional land commissions. They will coordinate the crop plans and agricultural resources in their region. They will be in charge of agricultural banking and will control and coordinate all rural credit institutions in their area. This commission will be composed of representatives of village panchayats, co-operative agencies, the state government and agricultural experts.

Over the regional commission there will be state land commission in each state. This will be in charge of planning, development and management of the rural economy and will look after such problems as land revenue, irrigation, agriculture, cottage industry, co-operative—both credit and multi-purpose—, crop planning on provincial level and allied problems.

The commission will be an autonomous body. It will be composed of representatives of regional commissions, co-operative agencies, the state government, and agricultural experts.

The Union Land Commission will be in charge of such items as agricultural planning on all-India basis, movement of crops, multi-purpose development projects including river-training and flood control. It will fix quotas for export and import of agricultural equipments, will regulate in a general way the price of agricultural produce and allot scarce resources like chemical fertilisers.

Freedom grows through participation; that is the surest way to arrest abuse of power, counter-encroachment against individual rights whether they be committed by public bodies, private employers, organisations or individuals. Such a sense of belonging has to be imparted to every citizen through not only self-governing institutions but also providing him a voice in the decisions in economic life which determine the direction of production and a pattern of distribution. The PSP aims to humanise the state and the economy, not statize man.

Eradication of Corruption

After two decades of freedom our nation has not been

freed of corruption in administration and in public life on the contrary it is ever on the increase. Those in authority and power have to set the tone of public life through their incorruptibility, impartiality and efficiency. In the last few years the corruption in high places has grown tremendously and has percolated down to the lower levels. The PSP have always waged a relentless campaign against the corrupt forces from the forum of the parliament, state legislatures and from outside. The PSP members of parliament have played a leading role in exposing corruption in high places.

The shady deals entered into by Messrs. Serajuddin & Co. with high-placed Ministers and officers were brought to light by the PSP MPs and the government was forced to institute an inquiry into the affair. This resulted in the exit of Central Minister for Mines and Fuels, Shri K. D. Malavia, as well as the prosecution of several government officials.

This was followed by the sensational disclosure by PSP MPs of the top secret C.B.I. report on illegal transactions of the two successive Chief Ministers of Orissa, Shri Biju Patnaik and Shri Biren Mitra, with business firms in Orissa. This exposure rocked the entire nation and brought to light the depths of corruption indulged in by Ministers for personal and party ends.

In Punjab the PSP carried on a relentless campaign against the corrupt regime of late Pratapsingh Kairon, the former Chief Minister of Punjab. The Supreme Court put its stamp of approval on the charges levelled against the corrupt administration in Punjab.

Though the exposures of corruption in high places, from the legislatures have their own place as a deterrent, by themselves such exposures alone are not adequate to combat corruption in administration and in public life. The PSP suggests certain reforms in administration whose implementation may help in the eradication of corruption.

When large sectors of economy increasingly come under social control, the need to check corruption is increased considerably. To eradicate corruption, the PSP favours the setting up of a statutory anti-corruption tribunal. The tribunal will be

empowered to enquire into corruption at the highest level. Any citizen will have the right to appear before such a tribunal to substantiate his allegations of corruption even against the high-placed ministers.

The responsibility of allocation of licences, quotas and permits will be entrusted to a quasi-judicial machinery independent of the government and the major source of corruption will be eliminated.

The overdue separation of the judiciary and the executive will be completed and the system of judiciary will be so re-oriented that justice will be within the reach of the common man.

The PSP considers that an appointment of an authority completely independent of the executive for the redress of citizens' grievances against the administration particularly of complaints regarding misuse of power and arbitrary exercise of discretion by ministers, on the lines of the "ombudsman" in Sweden is urgently called for. The appointment of such an authority may help in ensuring an efficient and clean administrative machinery.

Changes in the Constitution

PSP would not favour repeatedly tampering with the constitution of the country. However, it must be realised that the fabric of economic equality, social mobility and radical transformation in the society cannot be accomplished in the framework of the present constitution of India. Not only it presents many an obstacle to fundamental reforms but fails to reflect in crucial matters the wishes of the people.

The social aspirations of the people are baulked and frustrated by the existing constitution. The safeguards provided to the right of property facilitate the preservation of present inequities and make any egalitarian advance difficult. To ensure progress, these barricades raised to protect propertied classes will have to be razed down and the people's right to use state powers to establish equitable and just social relationship will have to be ascertained. This would include the power to take

away property with rehabilitation grant only, if such taking over by the state is found necessary.

While the right to property, enjoyed by a microscopic minority of the people is fenced off from all encroachments, the universal rights to liberty are hemmed in from all sides. The fundamental freedoms of the people – of speech, press, assembly, association and above all freedom from arbitrary arrest and detention—cannot be allowed to depend on the whims and wishes of the authorities. A positive and absolute content given to these rights alone can assure the citizens that they are free to live according to their own rights and even free to propagate their views so long as they remain loyal to the state which guarantees these rights. The PSP would therefore repeal all repressive laws and make the fundamental rights as real and complete as possible. The right to work has so far remained a pious wish. Its neglect involves not only mere individuals but social loss. The PSP would assure the right to work and thus banish the haunting fear of unemployment and want.

After the *de facto* acceptance of the principle of linguistic reorganisation of states and the consequent rearrangement of state boundaries, a lot of boundary disputes have arisen. These disputes cut across political loyalties and become a constant source of psychological obstruction to economic and social reconstruction. To eliminate all this the PSP would favour a constitutional provision for the appointment of supreme board of arbitration to resolve all inter-state disputes on the basis of well-defined uniform principles.

Under the present electoral system, a legislator once elected can afford to flout the mandate of the electorate. To avoid such a situation the PSP will make the constitutional provision for the right of recall which will empower the electorate to call back their elected representatives.

To avoid the misuse of power in the conduct of the elections the PSP would favour the constitutional obligations on the ministries to resign three months prior to the elections.

Linguistic Reorganisation

There is a considerable controversy going on in the coun-

try over the question as to whether it was right for free India to have accepted the linguistic reorganisation of states. The controversy has emanated not so much from the merits of the principle of linguistic states. It is essentially a reaction to repeated linguistic agitations which have created tensions and in some cases bitterness amongst different linguistic groups in the country. It must be admitted that some rational basis for the reorganisation of states was long overdue. In the freedom movement the Congress was already committed to the principle of linguistic redistribution of states not as an expression of parochial linguistic sentiments but as a basis to ensure close association of the people with the administration. The Administration of the state should be conducted in the language of the people of the region, was the guide-line of the principle. The emergence of the disintegrating tendencies in recent times is not so much due to the principle of linguistic reorganisation but due to the faulty and faltering manner in which the government sought to implement that principle. Even if the task of linguistic reorganisation were to wait for some years there would have been no agitations but when people from certain regions found that discriminating attitude was adopted by the government in bringing about linguistic reorganisation of states flood-gates of linguistic agitations were opened. Here again instead of conceding the claims gracefully on the basis of merits of the case, government's policy was to put premium on violence. That is how Andhra State was carved out. This gave impetus to agitations in different states as well.

The border disputes existing among different states are unfortunate hangovers of the muddled way in which linguistic reorganisation has been handled by the government. As mentioned earlier the only way to settle all these border disputes without encouraging disintegrating and disruptive tendencies is to appoint a supreme board of arbitration and settle the disputes without fear and favour on the basis of well-defined uniform principles. The situation can be salvaged before it is too late.

Students' Unrest

Among the students, unrest is growing at an alarming rate and it seems to be spreading all over the country like avalanche. How distressing to reflect that even those educational institutions with which the names of some of our tallest national figures have been associated have to be indefinitely closed down. When young men and women in other countries are preparing to land on the moon in a year or two, when youths in other countries in their thousands are enrolling in the Peace Corps and penetrating the jungle-bound nooks and corners of our country, what a tragedy that the flower of Indian youth should be smashing and overturning everything including the seats of learning, in blind fury? Unfortunately their sullenness and anger lacks that quality of "divine discontent" which should be the hallmark of every new generation. This is not surprising because the students are the victims of the same malaise whose origin can be traced to the unashamed rot at the highest level.

The PSP feels that we should try to approach the students, to understand with sympathy their grievances, to start a dialogue with them and make them conscious of the real challenge that faces the people of India. We cannot afford to be impatient or angry with our youth. They are the salt of tomorrow's society and if this loseth its flavour wherewith can it be salted?

It is high time that the central government institutes an enquiry committee with judicial power to lay bare the roots of the present discontent. Various questions can be posed which will need a thorough probe by the committee. Are the students emulating persons holding high positions in the government and outside about whose integrity serious doubts have been raised? Are any political elements taking advantage of the general discontent in the country and trying to mislead the students? Is the field of education being misused by the party in power to further its own ends and to provide patronage for their own nominee? And last but not the least, do the

students have certain genuine grievances as regards their courses and curricula, examinations and admissions to universities?

Probably government's unwarranted interference in the universities, receding rapport between students and the teachers, total absence of leadership, lack of amenities and an uninspiring curriculum, congestion in universities and above all grinding poverty are the factors that are frustrating the youths of the country and driving them to desperation. What is the form of their expression of discontent? Here they have the pattern set by their elders which they scrupulously emulate. If during agitations elders prefer to resort to arson, looting and violence, the youth cannot remain uninfluenced by this trend in our public life. When youngsters find the rulers drunk with power showing callous disregard and intolerance towards their opponents, the infantile adventurists in the legislatures indulging in trial of physical strength with marshal in the house, street demonstrators resorting to violence and the trigger-happy police treating bullet as the sole weapon to enforce law and order, the youngsters do not feel inspired to have a living faith in democratic norms of behaviour. Thus before we try to reform our youth we must try to reform ourselves and cleanse politics of all anti-democratic tendencies

Road to Chaos

Today the whole atmosphere in the country is surcharged with agitations that are crossing the bounds of peaceful and democratic means. In this climate the forces of chaos and disintegration thrive and seek to destroy the very fabric of our democratic life. With Chinese and Pakistani aggressors on our borders we can ill afford to perpetuate this atmosphere in the country. However, any superficial condemnation of violent agitations will not change the situation. The socio-economic roots of the present-day ills must be eradicated and people's legitimate grievances redressed. Only this will cut the ground below the feet of those who seek to foment trouble in the country.

In a free and democratic country like India there cannot be any bar on people's inherent right to launch agitations, struggles, strikes and hartals within the orbit of peaceful and democratic means. However, even the weapon of strikes and hartals now picturesquely described as '*Bandh*' to be effective must be wielded sparingly and in a discriminating manner and that too not in association with anti-national and anti-democratic forces who have a vested interest in chaos and anarchy in the country. Those who do not mind invitation to anarchy in India through extreme forms of agitations must remember that out of chaos will emerge not the 'Dancing Star' which they contemplate but a militant dictator who will destroy the basic foundations of our democracy. When in the name of food agitation, railway tracks are uprooted and stations and post offices burnt these acts cannot be considered as spontaneous expressions of people's hunger. There is a method in this madness and the method is cleverly planned by those who want to bring about a total collapse of democracy in India. Under these conditions those pledged to democracy and socialism must demonstrate in an effective way the efficacy of peaceful and democratic forms of struggles for the redressal of people's grievances and for the amelioration of their sufferings. To the extent democratic socialists in India accept this challenge the future of a stable democracy in India will remain undimmed.

Our Path

The Praja Socialist Party with its correct understanding of the political and ideological currents and cross-currents has always shown the foresight in warning the nation against aggression on our frontiers both from China and Pakistan. We had warned that the destruction of Tibetan autonomy by the Chinese Communists had brought the Chinese aggressors right to India's doors and had pleaded for vigilance against the Chinese aggression. We were then ridiculed as 'alarmists' and 'war-mongers'. The peace-mongers soon realised that our predictions were justified by events that followed. Again at the time of Pakistani aggression, PSP's spokesman in the parlia-

ment courageously asserted that once Pakistan had committed aggression on our territory through the Rann of Kutch and Kashmir, India had the inherent freedom to send our armies to any sector as an integral part of our military strategy and demanded that India should send her armies to the Lahore Sector to thwart further advances of the Pakistani forces. Those in power pooh-poohed this demand as adventurist and quixotic. But there again the victorious Indian Army that marched towards Lahore vindicated the stand taken by the PSP. The PSP in the parliament did singular service in exposing and unearthing the conspiracies hatched by Naga and Mizo rebels in collusion with China and Pakistan.

On the home front the PSP warned the nation against the disastrous economic policies of the government that led to nation's economic ruin.

The party carried on a relentless campaign against corruption in high places both from the forum of the legislatures and from outside.

Outside the legislatures the PSP remained at the vanguard of people's peaceful struggles for the amelioration of their sufferings.

In all these activities the PSP did not allow its loyalty to Socialism, Democracy and Nationalism to be weakened and disrupted. While championing the cause of the people from the forum of legislatures it maintained the dignity and decorum of the house because the PSP always believed that parliamentary institutions were the most effective organs of our democratic way of life.

The Praja Socialist Party invite the Indian people to rally under its banner and to forge the party into an effective instrument of building a socialist society in which the quest of the common man for a fuller and richer life will find its fulfilment.

Why SSP ?

by Madhu Limaye

I

THE SITUATION ON THE EVE OF THE FOURTH GENERAL ELECTIONS AND THE ROLE OF THE S S P

In February 1967 India's 25,00,000 voters will go to the polls to elect new legislatures and governments both in the States and at the Centre. The Congress party which held uninterrupted sway throughout the post-independence era is for the first time facing a formidable electoral challenge. The reputation of the Congress Governments is in tatters and many of its traditional and loyal supporters are assailed by doubts about its capacity to win the election, and still more, about its capacity to solve the nation's manifold problems. The petty election squabbles over distribution of Congress tickets and the new exodus of dissidents from its ranks have further weakened the party's hold over the people. The absence of a popular personality at the top has made the leadership apprehensive about the results of the forthcoming elections. The monsoon session of Parliament so demoralised the Government and the Congress leadership that they started admitting that the Congress majority at the centre will be reduced at least by 60 to 70 seats. A member of what has come to be known as the Syndicate recently put the Congress majority at the Centre at 300 in a House of about 520 members.

Even in the heyday of Jawaharlal Nehru's ascendancy, the Congress party never secured an absolute majority of the total popular vote. However, on the basis of its plurality of about 42 to 46 per cent it used to get nearly 70 per cent of the seats, largely because of the vagaries of the electoral system, multiplicity of political parties and, above all, their inability to achieve any kind of electoral adjustments among themselves. With the continuing erosion of the Congress strength and the people's yearning for a change the conditions are now ripe for the elec-

tion of non-Congress majorities and installation of the non-Congress Governments. Unfortunately the opposition parties have failed to rise to this great opportunity and instead of achieving a new cohesion amongst themselves have, individually, further split apart.

The attempt at socialist unity has only been a partial success: some elements have chosen to stay out of the new party of socialist unity—the Samyukta Socialist Party.

The Communist party has also split from top to bottom and the disputes between the two wings over division of seats in West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and other States have defied all solution. Even the suggestion of arbitration has been turned down.

The Swatantra Party which was formed to champion the cause of free enterprise and whose professed aim was to free business initiative from the shackles of excessive governmental regulations and heavy taxation has ended up by creating a feudal party. The Swatantra leaders realised that the appeal of a businessman's party was limited and that to win broad electoral support the easiest way was to bring the feudal elements into the party fold. The Swatantra Party which failed to develop an extensive mass base of its own came to rely solely on the members of the princely order and the old landlord classes in the hope that it will provide them with their major electoral support. In some places the 'modernized' leaders of the Swatantra Party and members of the princely order, with their traditional ways, failed to get on and with the defection of the Rajah of Ramgarh, the Swatantra unit in Bihar was virtually wiped out.

The Jana Sangh party has managed to hold together and even expand in certain parts of Northern and North-western India but it has failed to strike roots in the East and in the vast regions south of the Narmada.

The opposition picture is, therefore, characterised by divisions and conflicts and the emergence of the parallel Jana Congress in several states has introduced a new element of confusion in the already frustrating political situation. The failure of the Congress Government to provide a new focus of national loyalty and the opposition's failure to replace the Congress has led to the disquieting revival of the traditional cultural, caste, linguistic and religious loyalties. An ideological division largely

irrelevant in the Indian context, has further complicated the opposition situation and the intrusion of foreign powers, foreign influences and foreign money have fanned new antagonisms within the opposition ranks. The political scene, therefore, presents a bewildering picture to the electorate on the eve of the fourth general elections.

The Samyukta Socialist Party goes before the electorate as a party of national unity, democratic freedom and radical social change. The SSP is well aware that no single organised party today is strong enough to challenge and defeat the Congress at the national level. It also knows that no political party by itself can replace the Congress in any single state. If the country is not to suffer Congress rule for an indefinite period some kind of opposition unity is not only inevitable but necessary. The SSP, therefore, has come forward as the advocate of minimum opposition unity irrespective of ideological labels and differences on the basis of their past electoral performance and their present organisational strength. The success of this policy involves a certain amount of mutual tolerance and readiness to impose a self-denying ordinance by all opposition parties. This spirit of accommodation is sadly absent and the SSP's effort to secure electoral understanding among diverse political parties has evoked very limited response. In many cases the agreements reached have not embraced all parties and even the limited arrangements made have failed to cover the entire state or region. It would be wrong to say that it was ideological differences which have come in the way of these electoral agreements. Curiously parties which profess the same creed and are very close ideologically have failed to agree on the distribution of constituencies among themselves! There are of course some exceptions like Kerala where parties, which have no ideological affinity such as, say, the Right Communists and the Muslim League, have agreed to overcome their differences and present a united front. Similarly in Tamilnad, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam has reached accommodation with the Swatantra Party and the Muslim League on the one hand and some parties of the traditional Left on the other. Again, efforts were made to bring about an arrangement between the Swatantra Party, Jana Sangh and SSP in Rajasthan and Jana Sangh, SSP and Jana Congress in Madhya Pradesh. Even so the major objective of socialist policy,

viz., to have straight contests between the Congress and the opposition has not been achieved.

Samyukta Socialist Party holds that its main task is to unite all forces of socialism and democracy under its banner, strengthen the various mass organisations associated with it and develop a powerful people's movement against the bureaucratic, capitalist-feudal order.

The SSP is trying to become the party of revolutionary struggle; concretised socialist programme; patriotic fervour; decentralised democracy; and, above all, the sword of the oppressed and suppressed humanity. It is obviously not such a party today: it has to become one in as short a period as possible.

The SSP while according top priority to the building up of its own strength and the expansion of its mass base, at the same time adopts a positive attitude towards other parties. Indian political parties are today in a state of flux. The party of socialism itself has undergone considerable changes during the last 18 years. It would not, therefore, be proper to fix labels hastily or glibly make sweeping generalisations.

In pursuing its objectives the SSP necessarily makes a distinction between parties with which it can achieve organizational fusion and parties with which such unification is not possible in the foreseeable future. With persistent efforts and goodwill the SSP hopes to draw the first group of parties into the fold of the party of socialism. As to the second group of parties, friendly contacts are being established with them by the SSP with a view to promoting exchange of ideas.

On the one hand there are opposition parties whose faith and ideology incline to a bastard form of internationalism and one-party rule; on the other hand are parties which have a softness for the propertied classes and often adopt aggressive postures towards minority groups. Then again there are parties like the DMK which stress regional separateness as against national unity, but also reflect in some measure the social aspirations of the down-trodden masses.

The Republican party, for instance, is the symbol of the new awakening among the scheduled castes and their hunger for equality and a fuller life. The party of socialism would like to develop the closest possible contacts with these forces.

The SSP never overlooks the possibility of weaning the afore-

mentioned "left" parties away from extraterritoriality and authoritarianism, and of influencing the "right" parties in the direction of greater tolerance for minorities and socialised property. Above all, the SSP never forgets that the partial evil that these parties represent is sustained by the greater evil of the Congress Party and the Congress Government itself!

The SSP, while building up the mass movement unhesitatingly exploits the opportunities provided by parliamentary work for exposing the ruling party's ineptitude and misdeeds. It strives to transform our legislatures into mirrors of people's aspirations, miseries and frustrations. For effective legislative activity co-ordination with other opposition groups is constantly sought, and this coordination extends to elections of legislative committees and indirect elections to upper houses.

The SSP always seeks to articulate the people's aspirations and spearhead the people's struggles against oppression and injustice. When circumstances require the party cooperates with other parties on specific issues and mass struggles.

Electoral struggle is regarded by the SSP as part of the wider mass struggle. The Party's objective is to bring about the defeat of the Congress Government and to establish an alternative socialist government. In the existing situation, however, there is bound to be a time lag between the achievement of the first and the second objective. The interregnum will be characterised by a variety of political formations, new governmental patterns and new experiments. This will call for a certain flexibility of approach on the part of the political parties. The SSP is prepared to show this flexibility. In the coming election the Party wants that the uninterrupted Congress rule based on minority support is ended. This demands efforts to minimise division of opposition vote and allocation of constituencies among the various opposition parties. The SSP has taken the lead in bringing about these adjustments, though it cannot be said that the effort has been wholly successful.

The SSP will fight elections on the basis of its own platform and in the name of the Party, and its representatives in the legislatures shall not enter combinations which will have the effect of submerging the Party's identity. For elections no minimum programme or joint platform with other parties is being evolved. However, it feels that there should be initiated a dis-

cussion, both, within the Party and with other parties outside, about what the first steps of an alternative non-Congress Government should be in the event of the Congress losing its majority in the next election. In this discussion the specific and concrete programme of the SSP will provide the necessary guide lines for its representatives and members.

The SSP is wary about proposals for anti-Communist 'Democratic Front', with or without the Congress, or a 'Secular' or 'Leftist Front', again with or without the Congress. Such combinations, it holds, must blur vital aspect of socialist policy, divide the opposition and strengthen the ruling party.

II

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE SSP

The SSP traces its origin to the Congress Socialist Party which came into existence in 1934 as a radical group within the Indian National Congress. The C.S.P.'s avowed aim then was to sharpen the freedom struggle and bring within the fold of the national movement the industrial working class and the peasantry by giving a socialist orientation to the national programme. The C.S.P. had also sought to bring about consolidation of the socialist forces by establishing fraternal relations with the Communist Party. In its first aim of broadening the basis of the national movement it achieved important successes and the C.S.P. provided the main impetus and the leadership to the 1942 struggle against foreign rule in India. The attempt to achieve Socialist-Communist unity failed because of the extra-territorial affiliation of the Communist Party, its refusal to evolve an independent national line of its own and its total submission to the directives issued by the Moscow-dominated Communist International.

After the achievement of independence the position of the C.S.P. as a party within the Indian National Congress became somewhat anomalous. The dominant leadership of the Congress refused to heed Mahatma Gandhi's advice to dissolve the national organisation. It also refused to transform the Congress Party into a fit instrument of revolutionary change. The Indian National Congress, with its long historical tradition, was built up by Mahatma Gandhi as a formidable and unique mass organisation of the Indian people, with very wide and deep ramifications in the country and among the different sections of Indian society, in the course of the long years of the national struggle for independence. The control of the organisation gave a tremendous advantage to the dominant leadership and this advantage it was not prepared to forego whether in order to uphold the high moral

standards set by Gandhiji or to mould the Congress into a revolutionary party of socialism. Instead they decided to restrict its democratic functioning and transform it into a close and well-knit power machine. The continued existence of organised, programmatic parties as distinct from power political groups was intolerable to the dominant leadership which in 1947-48 took a series of constitutional and organisational measures to secure the withdrawal of the C.S.P. from the Indian National Congress. After Mahatma Gandhi's assassination whatever slender hope there was of C.S.P.'s continuing within the fold of the Indian National Congress was blasted and the cession of the Socialists became inevitable.

The C.S.P. reconstituted as an independent political force in the year 1948, faced a popular verdict, for the first time, in the General Elections of 1951-52. The intervening period saw a rapid but superficial expansion of the party after the introduction of the principle of mass membership and the adoption of an agitational platform in 1949. This brief period generated a lot of enthusiasm and had raised great hopes about the Socialist Party's prospects in the first electoral battle under adult franchise. Thus Mr. Ashok Mehta, the general secretary of the Party, analysing the by-election results in the interregnum, observed: "Popular allegiance is definitely moving away from the Congress. It is turning with growing deliberateness to the Socialist Party. The most acceptable alternative to the Congress is the Socialist Party in the eyes of our voters."

The Party decisions in regard to the scale of contest or the selection of constituencies were in no way related to the concrete organisational strength nor were they based in a great majority of constituencies, on the support won through agitations and struggles for the people's pressing social, political and economic demands. The strategy adopted was to put up as many candidates as possible and to rely upon the general mass discontent against the Congress regime to see the candidates through. The party put up 1799 candidates for the various assembly seats and 256 for the House of the People. The elections were a veritable disaster for the then Socialist Party. Although the party secured over 10 million votes in the assembly election and over 11 million for the House of the People, these votes were so scattered and thinly spread out that only a small proportion of the candidates

came out victorious and more than half failed to poll one sixth of the total valid votes cast, thereby forfeiting their security deposits. The Party returned only 12 members to Parliament and 125 to the various assemblies. The elections further revealed that in large parts of the country, in the South, East and North-West the immediate alternative to the Congress was not the party of socialism but parties based on regional, sectional, communal and extra-territorial loyalties.

The electoral defeat caused wide frustration in the Party, especially in its upper echelons but it also led to a searching of hearts among its adherents. The Party was perturbed by the multiplicity of political parties and the failure of any one party to come up as a viable alternative to the Congress. It became keenly aware of the danger of the fragmentation of the progressive vote and the opportunities it provided to the Congress of getting a large majority of seats on a declining plurality of votes. It, therefore, outlined a course of broadening the base of the party by drawing into its ranks all other like-minded groups and parties. Merger with Mr. J. B. Kripalani's K.M.P.P. was the result of this policy of consolidation and expansion. The PSP, as the new consolidated party was called, was, however, plagued by conflict between two opposite lines: the line of building up the party as an alternative to the Congress and the line of increasing cooperation with the Congress. The opposition line was based on the belief that the Congress could not be reformed from within or without and that only a new party, patriotic, democratic as well as revolutionary, could alone take the country out of its present impasse. The argument of Mr. Ashok Mehta, the advocate of the theory of cooperation was quite simple. In effect he argued: India has a leeway to make in the matter of economic development. If it is to avoid the Russian method or the way of capitalist development then the mass of the people must voluntarily accept sacrifices to enable the government to find the resources for building up the country's capital equipment. The duty of the opposition, therefore, was not to oppose the Government but to give it a helping hand in carrying out this national task. The theory looked very reasonable and logical on paper, but ignored the existing inequalities and injuries and the effort of the ruling party and the administrative machine to perpetuate them. It assumed quite wrongly that the ruling party

had the desire as well as the capacity to introduce basic changes and that cooperation between the Congress and the opposition on the basis of a radical programme of reforms was not only desirable but also feasible. The accent, according to Mr. Mehta, was to be not on combating the existing evils but on seeking "areas of agreement". The opposition would offer criticisms, but as there would not be any "teeth" in that opposition the question was how to make the Government accept the proposals made by the opposite party? On the contrary, the "constructive" part of the suggestions, viz. that the masses must put up with increasing tax burdens and other hardships imposed by economic development, that workers must accept a wage freeze in national interest and farmers willingly part with their surpluses, was such as would have only strengthened the government in its obdurate policy. The concrete result of the cooperationist approach was to make the progressive opposition an apologist for the Government.

It was this Asoka Mehta line of cooperation which was responsible for the split of 1955 and for the continuing weakness of the socialist movement, which ultimately resulted in large scale defections from the PSP under Mr Asoka Mehta in 1963-64.

After Asoka Mehta's exit the two wings of the divided socialist movement drew closer together and a new reunited party, named the Samyukta Socialist Party—the Party of Socialist Unity—was formed.

The reunification kindled new hopes, and held out the prospect of a wider consolidation of the non-communist progressive forces. It also led to a general radicalisation of the people and imparted new vigour to the working class and peasant movements. It also strengthened the legislative wing of the Party. Unfortunately, the newly achieved unity within the socialist ranks received a set back when a section of the former PSP parted company with the reunited party. The departure of these friends was deeply regretted by the SSP. The SSP refused to indulge in mud-slinging and countered the new PSP's attacks by a proposal for electoral understanding. It offered to sit with the PSP to divide up amicably the socialist constituencies between the two parties. In the event of the differences not being resolved, it proposed that the rival claims be submitted to mutually acceptable arbitrators. This fair and reasonable offer of the SSP evoked

no response from the PSP. The PSP leaders continued to make scurrilous attacks on the SSP and even decided to put up candidates against its many sitting members.

The PSP leaders have denounced the SSP's policy of seeking electoral adjustments with other opposition parties. But what the SSP has been trying to do on broad national and state levels openly and for the larger objective of destroying the Congress monopoly of power, the PSP has not been completely averse from doing locally, in a clandestine manner, for the narrow purpose of gaining a seat here or a seat there for its leaders!

The SSP, however, has not allowed these destructive tactics of the PSP leaders to cloud its judgement or deflect it from its political course. It has not gone out of its way to put up candidates against the PSP leaders merely for the purpose of defeating them.

The SSP is well aware that no single party is in a position to defeat the Congress by itself and so it does not reject opportunities for opposition understanding in the larger national interest.

It hopes to pursue even more vigorously, after the election, the political line of uniting the socialist elements within one single organisation of confederating with like-minded forces, and of cooperating with other opposition parties in providing alternative government, pledged to the carrying out of a specific and time-bound people's programme.

III

SSP: ITS IDEOLOGY

A programme is a short-run piece of ultimate principles just as ultimate objectives are the long-term total of several phased programmes. Political debate and propaganda in the country have hitherto centred on final objectives to the comparative neglect of immediate programmes. This debate and propaganda can and have become a danger to the political mind of India. Phrases such as 'economic and social equality', 'casteless and classless society', 'end of exploitation and equal opportunities', 'peace and democracy', 'minimum standards in food, clothing and housing for all', 'freedom and values and goodness' lend themselves to flourish and can be heard on all platforms. A general expropriation of phrases takes place and lethargy of mind and consequent inaction are an inevitable development, radicalism in speech but conservatism in action on the one hand and revolution in words but reaction in practice, become sanctified by daily usage. As long as the Indian people do not insist on political parties that they outline their roads of travel as distinctly as the end of their journey, the menace of inaction and to democracy will grow.

For the end of the journey is a smudge and a blotch and can be filled up like the void with *inaneities* pleasing to the ear, unless it is coupled with a definite description of the road that leads to the end. The SSP, therefore, insists both on a clear enunciation of the ultimate principles as also a spelling out of a definite and concrete programme. This will make it impossible for any government claiming to be progressive and socialist to display the acute distance between words and deeds, to which India has become a victim, but will also enable the people to grasp in meaningful detail the end of the socialist journey as distinct from that of other political parties. Should all political parties in the country act in similar wise, India's political mind will be

clear and its tone of action improve.

The Indian mind is traditionally happy at the false freedom that comes from the divorce of the abstract and the general from the concrete and the particular and India is today enjoying the meaninglessly free debate on abstract socialism to which most political parties profess their adherence. The Indian people must cry a halt to this and force their political parties to put concrete meaning into their abstract generalisations.

The SSP attempts to fix the meaning of such words as equality, social ownership, democracy and decentralisation and the like. Equality should thus have a concrete meaning in respect of property and incomes, both within the nation and among the nations. Such a concrete meaning of equality should fix the ratio between the highest and the lowest incomes, the types of permissible private ownership and, as a first step, a percentage of war budgets of every nation to go into an international pool for creation of an equal world.

All property used as a means of production which hire labour shall be socialised. Private ownership shall be restricted to such property as does not normally employ hired labour and shall in any case be restricted in such ways that the income on it does not exceed Rs. 1000/- per month. Social ownership shall be held at various levels corresponding to various structures of the state, from village to the federation. The first socialist government may be permitted to phase the programme of achievement of social ownership, a condition being that the first phase of the programme shall not fall short of socialisation of all large scale industry, including banks and other money institutions. Similarly, private ownership over land up to three times the size of a unit which a family of five may cultivate without employing hired labour or mechanisation will be permitted but all lands in excess of this will be distributed among poor peasants and landless labourers. Common lands which have been usurped into private ownership shall return to the village.

The SSP believes in the principle of cooperation and its application to ever-larger segments of our economic life. The principle of mutual aid and self-reliance needs to be applied not only in the sphere of consumer cooperation but also credit, marketing of agricultural produce, farming, cottage and small scale industries. The SSP is, however, opposed to bureaucratic domi-

nation in the cooperative movement and attempts to make it the handmaid of vested interests and the ruling groups. Among the various forms of social ownership the cooperative form will have an important place in socialist order of society.

The SSP rejects the concept of compensation for property in the belief that the state has every right to legislate on property and also because no government can in the foreseeable future award proper compensation for all properties that will have to be socialised in the public interest. The SSP accepts instead the concept of rehabilitation compensation, in terms of alternative employment or small money grants, to be awarded to those whom social legislation on property deprives of their livelihood.

Equality of incomes and expenditure should also be directly sought, for, even under social ownership of means of production, a class of bureaucrats, managers and political leaders with high salaries and allowances for comfort and luxury may grow and exceptionally successful men of the free professions may amass or spend great wealth. All incomes and expenditure shall be brought within such ratio that the top does not exceed ten times the bottom.

Democracy, in concrete terms, must mean not just a manner of speech in regard to some values generalised beyond meaning, but a guide to action on the basis of certain concrete principles that seek to actualise the democratic ideal. The possibility of changing public opinion by reasoning and debate is the postulate of democracy, and free speech is its essence. The greatest single quality of democracy in the present age is decentralisation and its meaning must be fixed both in terms of defined political power belonging to small units of direct democracy and economic arrangements and technology that would give the working man greater understanding of control over productive processes.

This would necessitate refashioning of the administration to suit the needs of production and efficient economy and not the needs of bureaucracy or power or pelf. Similar to the method of small scale industry is the need of a state in which power increasingly belongs to the small units of direct democracy. The mode of rule by its nominated bureaucracy shall be replaced wherever possible by rule of elected representatives. Units of direct democracy, such as the village, the town, and the district, shall take share in the sovereignty of the republic and in any

scheme of appropriate division and integration of powers, shall enjoy a constitutional status as honourable as that of central organs. As a first step, the office of the Collector shall be abolished, police shall be placed under district control and not less than one fourth of the total revenues and of plan money shall be spent under the initiative and control of district and village assemblies and executives.

Democracy in all circumstances shall be the sheet anchor of the ideas and programmes of socialism. Democracy means the inevitable answerability of administration to elected assembly. It also means recognition and respect of the limited personality of individual, party, government and State, four categories, which together constitute the agencies of political action. Demolition of their frontiers and of the definite rules of their separation aids democracy.

The SSP as a revolutionary party wants to clear away the accumulated debris of several centuries of India's history, the layers upon layers of social oppression and economic exploitation represented by the curious amalgam of caste and class, buttressed by the traditional religious and philosophical outlook. The system of castes, which has made private beggary more honourable than manual work, and the theory of Karma, which seeks deliverance from new action, although it is well aware that the accumulation of past deeds has to be worked out, have both erected a civilisation in which indolence of action is far easier to attain than the severe discipline of contemplation. A bureaucratic capitalism has further heightened the disease. While returns on speculative and commercial deals continue to be far more important than those of industrial or agricultural production, the government apparatus grows interminably and it functions more to preach and to teach and to regulate or interfere and generally to provide partisan employment than to produce. The remnants of a civilisation overwhelmingly *safedposh* and supervisory have been further sterilised by a bureaucratic and feudal capitalism.

Capitalism has cut up humanity into two parts, those generally living north of the Thirteenth Parallel, beneficiaries of the capitalist application of science to industry and agriculture, and those living south of it whose productive apparatus the new capitalist-imperialist system damaged—the coloured disinherited two-

thirds of the earth. While capitalism has engendered the clash between owners of concentrated capital and their native proletarians and the clash between forces of production and relations of production, it has also produced the graver contradiction between massive means of production over the one-third of the earth and the decaying apparatus of production over the rest. While it brought unheard of prosperity to Western Europe, North America and its colonial offshoots in South Africa and Australasia it imposed the peace of death on Asia and Africa and elsewhere, caused their populations to grow and their economic apparatus to decay. The task of capital formation over two-thirds of the world is far too colossal for private capital to accomplish. Capitalism cannot fulfil its primary function of providing capital to mankind. The effort to spread the capitalist integration to all mankind and make it universal is foredoomed to failure. Poverty and war have been the monstrous progenies of capitalism, poverty for two-thirds of mankind and war for the rest, and it is powerless to destroy its two children.

About the need of early destruction of capitalism and feudalism in two-thirds of the world, there should be no doubt or hesitation. Capitalism must increasingly mean poverty of body and soul to this part of the world. It cannot even feed these populations, it must perpetually undernourish them and occasionally starve them to death. It can only produce for profit and there is no scope for profit in these underdeveloped economies, not certainly in food and houses and tool that may make the small man produce wealth, but, perhaps, in margarine, medicine, cinemas and, above all, in speculation.

Communism is a doctrine of social ownership and of release of means of production from their relations of private property. The whole communist doctrine and its general theory on human civilisation is proving faulty, for capitalist relations of production are snapping where the forces of production are least developed, in areas of high density and low technology. The hope lies shattered that communism could build on the riches of capitalism. It obtains its infrequent opportunity alone in the ruins of capitalism, the areas of huge populations and small productive forces.

Communism inherits from capitalism its technique of production; it only seeks to smash capitalist relations of production.

Communism claims to be the continuator and developer of capitalist technology, when capitalism is no longer able to do so. Rationalisation of the existing economies on communist lines met with some success in the Soviet Union and South Eastern Europe because of the exceptionally favourable ratio that existed there between the total land area and other natural resources and their small populations. In East Asia similar communist rationalisation, although accompanied by a ruthless dictatorship, cannot be said to have achieved a definitive victory. The triumph of communist ideology and release of productive forces from the integument of the capitalist relation of production was supposed to lead to the final triumph of internationalism over nationalism. This universalist appeal of the communist ideology was one of its chief attractions for many people. The behaviour of the first communist state, namely, the Soviet Union, in its external relations and the conflicts inside the World Communist movement have proved that nationalism continues to be as dominant a concept of the age. The communist hope that certain general aims such as international brotherhood and withering away of the state would follow as an automatic consequence of the release of productive forces from the shackles of capitalism through a communist revolution has been totally belied. A new integrated ideology alone can bring new hope and new civilisation to the human race.

Such an ideology can only be the ideology of socialism. It is, however, beset today with traditional forms evolved in Europe. No greater misfortune could befall socialism if the historical peculiarities of its career in Europe were sought to be universalised and reproduced in the other two-thirds of the world. Socialism in Europe has been gradual, constitutional, and distributive. Socialism henceforth and in the rest of the world must be drastic, unconstitutional when necessary and lay the accent on production. While European socialists have earned lasting credit for their faith that to lose democratically is better than to win dictatorially, and thus have set up a model of constitutional action when socialism is in office, socialism in opposition must often adopt the ways of struggle. The processes of persuasion and law-making are not always available or timely; to them must be added the methods of class struggle, particularly in under-developed areas. Class struggle hastens and matures the destruc-

tion of capitalism without which two-thirds of the world cannot even make the first move. The class struggle against capitalism is expressed through two major types, that which destroys capitalism in one of its aspects and reinforces it in another and the other that achieves socialism. Undoubtedly, achievements in the direction of people's prosperity and welfare state made by socialism in Europe or socialism within national frontiers are an imperishable symbol for all the world.

Alongside of giving a firm foundation to the theory of socialism, it is equally necessary to discover appropriate forms of action through which the doctrine may be realised. All action should be aimed at the expression and organisation of the people's will and at reconstructing national life. The party of socialism should continually strive to become the spokesman of the people and organiser of its will, resister against injustice and accomplisher of reconstruction. It must be ready ever to take part in constructive action to enlighten the popular verdict and be enlightened by it in turn and to resist injustice; three modes of action are already symbolised by the spade, the vote and the prison. It must indicate by its accomplishment, however slender, in the present and while out of the office, what it promises when it is put into the government.

Lowly constructive action is the life-blood of all genuinely revolutionary activity. Revolution can never restrict itself to parliamentary action. While the vote is the supreme expression of the people's will, it is recorded once in several years. Insensitive submission ensures if the vote is not supplemented by recurrent awakening through invited suffering of civil resistance. Civil resistance and class struggle are but two names for a single exercise in power, reduction of the power of evil and increase in the power of the good. An act of civil resistance or class struggle must however pass the test of immediacy and must not make use of lies and violence and seek to justify present murder by an imagined outcome of future health.

The question of violence and non-violence as a means of social change has acquired a new meaning in free and republican India. While there have been people, official Gandhians and others, who have continued to preach the virtues of the non-violence of inaction, governmental violence and brutality in the form of wholesale arrests without trial, police firing on unarmed

crowds etc. on the one hand and long period of submissiveness and sporadic outbursts of mass violence and savagery on the other have between them held the centre of the stage these many years. Civil resistance, mass and individual, has not as yet intervened decisively in India's public affairs. The socialists must practice civil disobedience in a decisive way and disprove the validity of the traditional belief in the impossibility of overthrowing the existing order except by force.

The SSP is committed to the principle of equal irrelevance of capitalism and communism in respect of the creation of a new human civilisation. It wishes to build a third camp that keeps away from the Atlantic and the Soviet systems and does not prefer one to the other, holding the two equally good and equally evil and strives to create a civilisation of free men in an equal world. Such a world can be built alone on the basis of the doctrine that all men are equal not only within the nation but also among nations.

Votaries of the theories of co-existence in foreign policy maintain that the capitalist and communist systems and their respective blocs can co-exist in peace. Actually both camps press this theory of co-existence into their service mainly to buy a respite when the tensions of cold war become unbearable and the acquisition of nuclear weapons produces a stalemate. Two systems, mutually contradictory, hostile and suspicious, cannot co-exist unless a third new system and integration begins to gather strength and forces the two to co-exist in peace.

Conformism is motivated by the desire to check and cure evil and co-existence by the desire not to impose the truth, as one sees it, on the other. Beyond these two is a third attitude of mind that unites both these desires and is aware that a third new system of growing authority is necessary for two warring camps to live in peace. The moral appeal of the system, aided by growing economic and armed power, will start a process of approximation between the two warring camps in which they agree to check and remove their own excesses and try to approximate to the new creation and to one another. The creators of a new civilisation must be actuated by impulse of co-existence with approximation in their foreign policy.

True and effective disarmament can be achieved only when the world becomes equal. The gross disparity in productive

power of the developed one-third and the underdeveloped two-thirds of mankind produces a serious economic imbalance, giving rise to various forms of conflicts and to the mad race for armaments to conserve the treasures of the privileged parts.

Foreign aid in its present form is not only humiliating and dangerous to the receiving countries but can never be adequate to meet their needs and requirements. Such aid definitely corrupts the backward countries and invariably maintains in power the forces of status-quo. Aid to under-developed countries must come through a World Development Authority to which every nation contributes according to its ability and from which every nation receives according to its needs.

International tensions and conflicts of the day relate largely to disputed sovereignty over one territory or another or modes of unification of unnaturally partitioned countries. The mixing up of these disputes with the global conflict of power camps has stood in the way of their resolution. A programme of recognition of existing states in order to ease tensions, of pacific unification of artificially partitioned people in order to resolve conflicts, and of guaranteed neutralisation, with limitation of armaments, of defeated nations and other possible spring-boards of attack is the only realistic basis on which such international problems can be tackled.

It is only the doctrine of socialism and its resolute practice on an international scale that can usher in a new world order. In this age the universal doctrine of socialism and its practice must manifest themselves through the seven revolutions:

1. The revolution of men-women equality;
2. The abolition of inequalities based on colour ;
3. Elimination of inequalities of birth and caste ;
4. End of foreign oppression and world government ;
5. Against economic inequality based on private property and for planned increase in production ;
6. Against encroachments on private rights ; and
7. Against armaments and for the principle of civil disobedience.

To these seven revolutions the SSP dedicates itself.

IV

POLITICAL PROGRAMME

Constitutional Amendments

1. The SSP shall seek to amend the constitution with a view to

- (a) facilitating rapid social changes ; •
- (b) democratising the political and administrative structure ;
- (c) ensuring decentralisation of power and people's active participation ; and
- (d) removing restrictions of civil liberties.

2. Concretely, this would necessitate amendment of provisions relating to property rights and compensation (Article 16); insertion of new provisions, defining the constitutional status of local bodies; and reservation for backward people (Article 31); abolition of second chambers and privy purses to the ex-rulers of the Indian States. It would seek deletion of Article 32 (4) and Article 358 which take away the right of the citizens to move the court for the enforcement of fundamental rights. As to preventive detention, it would not allow it to be a normal law of the land but by suitable amendment make these laws operative only in case of an emergency; and it would always make detention orders under this legislation subject to judicial review. The SSP would also like to restrict the ordinance-making power of the executive and experiment with a new type of second chamber, elected on a functional basis, whose duty it would be to debate economic policies, plans and relevant legislation.

Civil Liberties

1. All government servants, excepting members of the armed forces, armed constabulary and police and office cadre in the policy-making administrative and managerial ranks shall have the right to become members of political parties.

2. All restrictions on the political democratic rights of public sector employees, including railwaymen and civilian defence employees, and of semi-government institutions, such as municipalities and Panchayats shall be lifted.

3. Members of ordinary police force shall be allowed to form associations in order to seek redress of their grievances.

4. A reform of the criminal law in order to remove its repressive features and secure for the citizens protection from arbitrary arrest and harassment shall be initiated.

5. Platform of judicial procedures with a view to reducing frustrating delays and ensuring cheap and speedy justice shall be undertaken.

6. Separation of the Judiciary from the Executive shall be completed forthwith and provisions such as production within 24 hours before the nearest magistrate shall be strictly enforced.

7. The emergency proclaimed by the Government after the Chinese invasion in October 1962 and continued even after the conclusion of the Tashkent Declaration shall be abrogated. The proclamation and continuance of a state of emergency can be justified only when there is a clear and present danger of invasion. As for the threat of Chinese expansionism, it is likely to be with us for several years. The emergency provisions of the Constitution were certainly not meant to cover periods running into decades. Ordinary laws of the land, correct policies and strict vigilance can meet the threat effectively. This desire to cling to extra-ordinary powers is giving rise to bureaucratic excesses, violence and brutality all round. To seek to usurp extraordinary powers in the name of emergency is to commit a fraud on the Constitution. The SSP will, therefore, not only revoke such a fraudulent emergency but also repeal the draconian provisions of the DIR.

Decentralisation

1. With the object of liquidating all relics of imperialist-

bureaucratic system and establishing full democracy, the SSP will introduce the following changes :

- (a) The replacement of the system of indirect elections to district panchayats by a system of direct elections. All seats in local bodies should be filled by elections and not by nomination. To protect the interest of groups such as backward classes, harijans, adibasis, women, reservation of seats may be resorted to.
- (b) Abolition of the post of the district collector and the transfer of all function to the elected district council.
- (c) The posts of municipal commissioners and chief officers shall not be filled by State Governments. These officers will be appointed by municipalities and will be responsible to these elected bodies.
- (d) District councils, municipalities and panchayats will have their status defined in the Constitution itself.
- (e) At least twentyfive percent of all development expenditures shall be spent through the local bodies.
- (f) Ownership and management of appropriate socialised industries shall vest in local bodies.
- (g) State Governments and municipalities shall be entitled to regulate the prices of urban lands. Ownership of these will vest in municipalities and Government, which shall prepare schemes for town planning, cheap housing, etc.
- (h) Municipalisation of urban housing in such a manner that no person shall be allowed to own more than one house.
- (i) Prohibition of new industries in the overgrown urban centre except in exceptional cases by the permission of the legislatures; a planned dispersal of industries so as to prevent unhealthy urban concentration and promote balanced industrial development throughout the country.

2. Vast open spaces in the form of clubs, race course, etc., in urban areas which are the virtual monopoly of the top one per cent shall be utilised for genuine public purposes.

REFORM OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

The question of procedural reform must be approached from the standpoint of the effective functioning of our parliamentary institutions. The Lok Sabha will become a venerable institution only to the extent it faithfully reflects the joys and sorrows, the hopes and aspirations of the people. Parliamentary procedure must facilitate debate and discussion of important issues. It should not be an instrument in the hands of the Government for stifling criticism of its policies or exposure of its misdeeds. Parliament will lose all significance if it is allowed to be exploited by the ruling party merely as a rubber stamp.

Parliamentary procedure must protect minority rights and afford genuine opportunities for discussing matters of public importance in the House. It must also enable members to question and cross-examine the Ministers and subject the administration which wields vast power to a close scrutiny.

We must give up the practice of citing British Parliamentary Conventions and usage only when it suits the ruling party. What should be done is to approach British Parliamentary practice critically, adopt and apply its liberal democratic principles and, if possible, improve upon them.

Article 118(1) of the Constitution confers on each House of Parliament the right to frame its own Standing Orders and Rules of Procedure. It is a pity, however, that the Lok Sabha never had any full-dress discussion on its own procedure. The Rules of Procedure were not even laid on the table of the House till 1954, and the practice of submitting changes in the procedure for the approval of the House was introduced four years after the Constitution came into force.

Arbitrary Rule

The existing procedure confers on the presiding authority absolute, dictatorial powers in many matters. The result is not Rule of Law but arbitrary rule by an individual who belongs to one political party, namely, the ruling party. Since we have not adopted the British practice of the Speaker severing his connection with his political party upon election to the *chair*, this is all the more reason why the Speaker's discretionary power in India should be limited to the essential minimum. Discretionary power is an expression which has been much abused in our parliamentary institutions. Discretionary power, if it is to be reasonably exercised, must be severely restricted.

In order to maintain and enhance the impartiality, prestige and dignity of the Speaker's office, certain conventions need to be evolved and adhered to by the Ruling Party as well as the Opposition. Let me enumerate them.

- (a) Presiding Officers of the Indian Legislatures should by convention be above party and should resign forthwith from the membership of the political parties to which they belong after their election to the Chair;
- (b) Again, by convention they should be asked to seek re-election to a Legislature as Independents and political parties should not put up candidates against them;
- (c) Presiding Officers should not be offered nor should they accept upon retirement political office, such as that of Governor, Vice-President and President; and further
- (d) Presiding Officers should be given adequate pension to enable them to live honourably and with dignity after retirement, after the end of their tenures.

Rule as Guide?

Where the Constitution or the Statute or the Rules of Procedure are clear, there should not be any departure from those rules. Insofar as the matter is not covered by the Rules, the presiding authority or the House can certainly derive guidance from the rules. But where the rules are specific any departure from them can only work against individual members and smaller groups.

Protection of Minority

Mr. Onslow, the ablest among the Speakers of the House of Commons, used to say, 'It was a maxim he had often heard when he was a young man, from old and experienced Members, that nothing tended more to throw power into the hands of administration, and those who acted with the majority of the House of Commons, than a neglect of, or departure from the rules of proceeding; that these forms, as instituted by our ancestors, operated as a check and control on the actions of the majority, and that they were, in many instances, a shelter and protection to the minority, against the attempts of power.'

Question Hour

We shall now indicate briefly the reforms and changes that are called for in the existing procedure. We begin with the important and interesting Question-Hour.

The British practice on the admissibility of questions is very clear. On page 349 of May's *Parliamentary Practice*, it is stated:

"The Speaker's responsibility in regard to questions is limited to their compliance with the rules of the House. Responsibility in other respects rests with the Member who proposes to ask the question."

Why then cannot the members of our Legislature be trusted to act with a sense of responsibility? The present discretionary power to disallow questions without giving any reason is sometimes not properly used by the Secretariats. The result is that sometimes inconvenient questions get shut out or protection is, unwittingly, extended to Ministers in potentially embarrassing situations.

Similarly, there should be no restriction on the number of unstarred questions a member may ask provided that questions comply with the conditions laid down in the Rules.

According to the British usage, the Minister may refuse to answer a question on any of the following grounds:

- (a) It is not in public interest to disclose the information asked for,
- (b) Labour involved in collecting the information is not commensurate with the results achieved, and
- (c) Information is not available.

(May, Page 351, XVII Edition)

This is not to suggest that we take away from the Ministers their right to refuse answers to questions on the above grounds, but increasingly we are witnessing a very frustrating tactic adopted by the Ministers to return irrelevant answers or give perfunctory replies. The Rules should therefore authorise the Speakers to call the Ministers to order and make them give relevant answers. This will not take away any of the essential rights of Ministers but will only make them more responsible and careful in answering questions. It will act as an effective check on their irresponsibility and superciliousness and make the Ministers do their home-work properly. Incidentally, it will also save the valuable time of the House which is taken by the Members' raising points of order or seeking the Speaker's protection and the Speaker then repeating the question for the Minister's benefit. It is not proper to say that the Member should find out his own remedy. This is a counsel of despair and will deliver a death blow to the Member's faith in the efficacy of parliamentary procedures. This is a most essential reform and will considerably improve the quality and level of the Question-Hour exchanges.

Absolute Power

The distinction between the inherent right of the Speaker to hold whether a particular notice or motion is in order and the power to give or withhold the consent is of great significance. Power to hold a particular notice in order is a very restricted power but is absolutely necessary for the orderly conduct of business of any Assembly. The grievance against the existing procedure is not that it gives the presiding authority this absolutely essential power but that it also clothes him with absolute, discretionary power which cannot but result in the suppression of discussion on important issues in the House.

Acceptance of motions should not be dependent on the sweet will of the Government. The procedure in this regard should be regularised. The motions held in order by the Speaker and recommended by the Sub-Committee should be balloted and at least the first 3 should be taken up for discussion in a short session and 4 in the Budget session. This is only the minimum. More discussions of short duration the merrier!

Two Classes of Rights

There is nothing sacrosanct about the number 50 whether for the purposes of no-confidence motion or for the resolution for the removal of the Speaker. The attendance in the Assemblies all over the world is thin except on very special occasions and most Assemblies dispense with the provision of quorum. After all the motion is taken up only for the purpose of discussion. A party enjoying legislative majority is always in a position to defeat the motion.

There is no need to seek the Speaker's prior permission to raise the issue and seek the leave of the House for moving the removal resolution. The right to move resolutions for the removal of the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker is a right conferred by the Constitution. You cannot make the exercise of this right dependent on the acquiescence of 49 other members. Even if a single member should want to move such a resolution, the right should be conceded to him. It will act as a check on the presiding authority and will ensure not only that he or she is impartial but appears to be so even to minority groups in the House. To hold that members would want to move such resolutions every day is to have very poor opinion of members and their sense of responsibility. In fact the very existence of such a right will make it unnecessary for the members to have recourse to it in actual practice.

Presiding authority in legislatures must always distinguish between two classes of members' rights. The first class of rights are derived from the Constitution, such as the right to move resolution for the removal of the President, the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, no-confidence motion and privilege motion. They all flow from the provisions of the Constitution. The presiding authority should not deny these rights to members. The

other class of rights, such as the right to ask questions or to move adjournment motions flow from the Rules of Procedure and are derivative rights, or rights of a secondary nature. An extensive list of the conditions in respect of these rights is understandable. But exercise of the rights which have their origin in the Constitution cannot and should not be restricted.

The present procedure in respect of privilege motions is not only against the British practice and usage on the subject *but also, against the spirit and letter of our Constitution*. In raising a matter of privilege, there is no need to seek permission of the Speaker. The absolute discretionary power conferred on the Speaker by the present Rules has made the ministers reckless in making statements. They show scant regard for the privilege of the House or its Members. The House today does not even discuss the question whether leave should be granted to a Member to raise the privilege question or not. It is the Speaker who decides it arbitrarily. What prevents Parliament from evolving its own law of privilege? The SSP would like these privileges to be codified so that the rights of citizens and the Press are not encroached upon and an harmony is established between these rights and the Privileges of Parliament.

Meanwhile, the British practice that privilege motions which in the opinion of the Speaker have made out a *prima facie* case should receive priority but other motions too be put down on the order paper and taken up in the ordinary course of business, should, therefore, be adopted.

Role of the Opposition

Opposition Parliamentarians are members of India's representative assembly who have been sent there to criticise, embarrass and oppose the Government as also articulate the people's aspirations. Certainly the SSP holds that opposition members are not sent by the electors to Parliament to exchange pleasantries with those sitting on the Treasury Benches. Simply because what somebody says is unpleasant or hurts, or because he is given to using forceful language and picturesque expressions, the majority do not have a right to terrorise the minority and also pressurise the presiding authority into doing something which he is not inclined to do and which is also against the established pro-

cedure and rules.

The Standing Orders of the House of Commons do not allow the suspension of a Member for the rest of the session on the first instance as the Lok Sabha Rules seem to permit. Such an absolute and dictatorial power is bound to be exercised in an arbitrary manner by a party which has a huge majority and especially where the Opposition is not only weak but divided. In fact, this power has often been so exercised by the ruling party in India's Parliament. A modification of the existing rule is, therefore, necessary. The adoption of the House of Commons' standing order will not in any way whittle down the authority of the Chair; it will only put some curb or check on the power of the majority to act in an arbitrary system of graded punishment, expulsion for the rest of the session being resorted to on the third or fourth occasion.

The SSP is opposed to the principle of the Speaker's nominating important parliamentary committee etc. They should be *elected* on the basis of proportional representation, and various groups should nominate their most experienced and seasoned members for election to these vital committees of our legislatures.

The present parliamentary procedures such as Question Hour, Short Notice Questions, Calling Attention Notices, short duration discussions and General Debates are not adequate for the purpose of eliciting the necessary information about governmental activities which are increasingly becoming more and more complex, nor are they useful as effective instruments of scrutiny and examination. A Committee System is, therefore, absolutely necessary.

To begin with these Committees can be established for certain departments on an experimental basis and then extended to the whole gamut of governmental activities. These Committees should consist of Members who are deeply interested in the subject or propose to specialise in the work of these departments. These Committees should be empowered to call witnesses, ask for important papers and documents from the government and even hold public hearings, if necessary.

Of course, the Ministers are likely to resist this procedural reform as it is likely to curb arbitrary exercise by them of their discretionary powers. But without these Committees scrutiny of

the administration or proper expert examination of legislative proposals, training of young parliamentarians and of future Ministers will become impossible.

If Legislatures are to be an object of continuing public interest and respect, then certain overdue changes in their antiquated procedures must be carried out without delay. To talk merely of dignity does not take us anywhere.

VI

ECONOMIC POLICY

The present crisis in our national affairs has many facets. The continuing food shortages, rising prices, growing inequalities, mal-distribution of wealth and increasing corruption are the direct results of the emasculation of the national revolution by the Congress party.

Under Congress Raj, the value of rupee has fallen to 2½ annas of the pre-war period, and inflation has been increasing at a frightening pace. India which, in the pre-independence days, ranked as the eighth country in the matter of industrial production has come down to the fourteenth place; agriculture is in a miserable state; food imports have risen from 2 million tons per year to 12 million tons. These imports to date have cost the exchequer over Rs. 28 billion and national indebtedness has risen to the intolerable level of Rs. 90 million.

After devaluation the burden of foreign debt has increased by 57.5 per cent. The hope that devaluation would give a boost to exports has been belied. The exports, in fact, have registered a decline after devaluation!

During the conflict with Pakistan economic aid was suspended. The prospects of long term aid are none too bright.

There is acute shortage of industrial raw materials and in the first year of the Fourth Five Year Plan industrial production, especially in the metal and engineering industries, showed a precipitate fall.

In terms of economic growth, our country has been lagging behind other countries. China, which only 16 years ago was roughly on the same level as India, has surpassed us in many spheres. This begging for food and aid on a world scale has dealt a disastrous blow to the nation's prestige.

No palliatives or mere adjustments will enable us to overcome

this crisis. For this, fundamental changes are called for which the existing Government is incapable of initiating.

The Congress Government is plagued by the dichotomy between speech and action, profession and practice. The overthrow of this Government of the established order is the primary task of the Indian people.

The transition from the present capitalist-feudal order to a socialist order, from the present monopolistic Congress rule to a full-fledged socialist Government will reflect the ever rising tempo of class struggles and civil disobedience, mass and individual, during which the character of the State and political and economic institutions and people's temper will have become radically transformed. The economic programme offered here will enable the people to establish alternative governments and initiate bold new policies.

Planning

The total bankruptcy of the Congress economic planning is underlined by (a) standstill in food and agricultural production; (b) sluggish industrial growth; (c) continuing increase in unemployment and (d) increasing disparities in wealth, incomes and styles of living, whereby an infinitesimal minority of one per cent grabs a very large share of the total national product. It is significant that the time of Chinese attack on India coincided with the year of stagnant production and of decline in per capita income.

In order to lift the country from this morass an all out investment effort is called for. This effort can succeed only in an egalitarian atmosphere. Maximum achievable equality and all-round austerity and stable prices of essential commodities are the pre-conditions of such an investment effort and acceleration of the rate of economic growth. While there has been some economic development in relation to our past, compared to other newly freed countries and our own crying needs this development has been insignificant. Further the fruits of increased production and wealth have gone to sustain ostentation and luxury of an imperceptibly increasing minority. The broad masses continue to languish in poverty, misery and disease. The SSP will seek to give a boost to investment and development by first

creating an equalitarian revolution and instilling a spirit of idealism among the producers in factories and on land.

Planning in India must choose between two paths; the path of raising small sectors of our people, by stages, to modern western standards or the path of raising the entire people, in howsoever imperceptible degrees and in howsoever long a period, to a decent living standard. The first path is the path of the Congress. The second path is the one advocated by the Samyukta Socialist party. In the Congress conception of economic planning, every year a few lakhs of people will attain modern styles of living. Under the Socialist dispensation creation of basic productive equipment and basic amenities such as supply of drinking tap water and provision of latrines in all the villages will receive top priority. The Congress course increases inequalities in wealth and income, deadens social conscience, turns upside down the scale of values and breeds all-round corruption. Extreme poverty and extreme inequality are but twins and there is glittering wealth at the top and filth at the base together. A total mobilisation of the people and resources is not possible in this climate.

Regional Disparities in Income

The extreme disparity between the income of the top one per cent and the bottom sixty per cent of our population is paralleled by the frightening inequality (a) between the metropolitan areas and the rural areas, and further (b) between the per capita income of the relatively advanced States and regions on the one hand and of those which have been allowed to remain backward on the other.

This inequality is largely the result of the fact that for anything between 50 to 200 years the foreign Government concentrated its investments and development effort in areas which were either centres of international commerce or had a special political significance for the stability of British Raj. The Congress Governments have virtually done nothing to alter this pattern.

After fifteen years of official planning, the Government has still not collected data on the distribution of per capita income, statewise and district-wise. Without these figures, meaningful

planning and balanced development of all regions is not possible.

A non-official study of inter-State and inter-District income differentials showed that whereas in 1955-56 Bihar, U.P. and Orissa had a per capita monthly income of only about Rs. 12.5, Rs. 15 and Rs. 15.6 respectively; West Bengal (largely because of Calcutta), Maharashtra (mainly due to Bombay) and Punjab enjoyed a monthly per capita income of as much as Rs. 24.6, Rs. 24 and Rs. 23 respectively. The position five years later had not improved. The same non-official agency conducted another survey for the year 1960-61 and its conclusions were startling. Whereas the per capita income of Delhi, Maharashtra, West Bengal and Punjab was Rs. 72.6, Rs. 39, Rs. 38.7 and Rs. 37.6 respectively, that of Bihar was just about Rs. 19.2, of Rajasthan Rs. 22.3 and Orissa Rs. 23. •

The poorest districts in the country, too, are concentrated in Bihar (specially North Bihar), U. P. (particularly its Eastern and Northern hilly regions) and Orissa. During the last five years, while per capita income has not increased much, the relative differentials have, if anything, become more pronounced. The SSP by conscious deliberate planning on socialist lines will try speedily to correct this imbalance.

Equality

Since equality is the very kernel of socialism, the Samyukta Socialist Party will try to give it concrete expression through its taxation measures, income policy and nationalisation, etc. It would bring disparities within the ratio of 1:1 and take the first step by putting a ceiling of rupees one thousand on all incomes and expenditures. This ceiling will be inclusive of all allowances, expense accounts and other amenities. Ceiling on incomes and expenditure will entail a ceiling on assets and property. A beginning has to be made by nationalising part of the assets of the Ministers and legislators, ex-rulers and businessmen, that is, the mighties of the land. In the view of the SSP, the differentials of this order (i.e. 1:10) provide a sufficient incentive for productive effort.

Primary education shall not only be free and compulsory but also equal. All special primary schools shall be abolished.

There shall be only one class of travel on railways and buses.

Capital Accumulation

The question of socialist construction is essentially a question of capital accumulation. The SSP believes that this question can be tackled only on the basis of austerity, sacrifice and maximum admirable equality.

Through capital levy, expenditure tax, ceiling on income and poverty, voluntary labour etc. resources will be raised for the re-construction of India's industry. Rapid economic expansion will provide increasingly large resources for capitalisation and eventual improvement of the living standards of the common people.

Agriculture

1. Land tax on profitless agriculture shall be abolished.
2. Re-division of land, elimination of all intermediaries and ceiling on family holdings at three times the economic holding.
3. Cancellation of all fraudulent entries and land transfers, stopping of all ejectments, and restoration of the land to the actual tiller.
4. Abolition of the system of share-cropping. The tiller of the soil must be enabled to enjoy the fruit of his labour. In areas where the share of the landlord is 50 per cent or more to begin with there should be legislation fixing the share of the share-cropper and landlord in the ratio of 3:1. and effective measures for its strict enforcement.
5. A minimum wage should be fixed for agricultural labourers and machinery established for its implementation. Co-operation of the organisations of agricultural labourers shall be enlisted for enforcing this minimum wage.
6. Creation of a food army for bringing new land under the plough and voluntary brigades to execute small works to increase production under the leadership of panchayats and peasant organisations.
7. To supplement income from agriculture production of seasonal fruits, like mangoes, guava, etc., shall be encouraged and factories set up to make jams and to can perishable fruit. The

government should start orchards in the hilly areas, especially in the Himalayan foot-hills and make official arrangements for purchasing private local produce. The government will also encourage poultry and dairy farming to increase production of eggs and milk etc.

8. After the programme of re-division of land has been thoroughly carried out graduated agricultural income-tax shall replace the present land revenue.

9. A scheme of crop insurance shall be introduced to give security to the peasant.

10. Agricultural loans shall be liberalised.

11. Agricultural labourers, harijans, adivasis and women without means should be freed from the burden of debts. The government will cancel these debts outright or take part of the burden on itself.

12. Profitless agriculture shall be exempted from compulsory grain levies and there shall be a graded levy on big landholders and millers.

Irrigation

For increasing agricultural production free irrigation facilities to the poor peasants and cheap irrigation to the rest shall be a top object of socialist economic planning.

Famines and Floods

The old famine codes shall be replaced by a new comprehensive statute dealing with famine and scarcity conditions, under which the Central Government will acknowledge its responsibility of feeding the people in terms of the directive principles of the Constitution. Meaning of such terms as natural death and death by starvation shall be clearly defined and if any adult dies who has received less than 150 grams of grain for three consecutive months or more, his death shall be regarded as death by starvation, whatever be its immediate clinical cause.

- (a) Free meals, even if of subsistence type, shall be provided by the government in famine stricken areas.
- (b) The Government shall investigate fully the causes of re-

curing floods and devise adequate preventive measures such as proper drainage, bunds, culverts, reservoirs, over-bridges, etc. The burden of paying full compensation to those who have lost their houses, draught animals, farms, and other property shall be laid on the Government.

Price Policy

1. The Samyukta Socialist Party will introduce an integrated welfare price policy, the main features of which will be as under :

- (a) Essential manufactured articles of consumption shall not sell at more than $1\frac{1}{2}$ times the cost of production. This will be inclusive of all taxes and profits.
- (b) The present wide fluctuations in the prices of foodgrains at harvest time and in pre-harvest period shall be brought under control. This fluctuation shall not be allowed to exceed more than six paise per seer or roughly sixteen per cent.
- (c) Peasants should be given a remunerative price for their produce, that is to say a price which will cover their cost of production and ensure them a decent minimum standard of living.
- (d) There shall be established parity between the prices of agricultural commodities and those of manufactures.
- (e) The same principle of parity shall be insisted upon in international trade so that the exploitation of the poor nations (primary producers) by the rich ones is mitigated.
- (f) There shall be socialisation of the wholesale trade in foodgrains.
- (g) This socialisation of wholesale trade will be so achieved that services of small retailers will be harnessed for national purposes.

The SSP is a friend of the small traders and retailers who are today victims of irksome government controls and regulations as well the big capitalists and distributors. The interests of the common people and these petty traders can and must be harmonised with a view to achiev-

ing the maximum common good.

- (h) Export of all food articles shall be prohibited till such time as hunger has been banished from this land.
- (i) Sales tax on food articles and eatables shall be abolished.

Industry

The Samyukta Socialist Party favours socialisation of all means of production and business which employ wage labour. There may, however, be a phased programme of socialisation of which the first phase should embrace strategic sectors such as iron and steel, engineering, chemicals, electricity, minerals, sugar, cloth, cement, insurance and banking and export and import trade.

In regard to the public sector, the SSP is of the view that there is today not only a lot of wastage and inefficiency, but this sector is vying with the private sector in perpetuating intolerable disparities in incomes, perquisites, and amenities of higher echelons of the bureaucracy and those of ordinary workers. The SSP will purge the public sector of these blemishes, and re-organise it on democratic principles so that the workers and the consumers will have an effective say in its management.

The growing reliance of India on outside assistance, the sizable increase in foreign capital investments (from nearly Rs. 256 crores in 1948 to Rs. 681 in 1963 according to the Reserve Bank) and the tie-up of foreign firms with the Indian business houses are creating a potentially dangerous situation. Apart from the drain they constitute by way of remittances (Rs. 40 crores per annum), their stranglehold over some vital sectors of our economy is alarming. The oil companies especially must have recovered their invested capital thrice over during the last decade, for their annual profits vary between 30 to 50 per cent per year. Their example is an invitation to the Indian capitalists to join the race for plunder and quick profits. The Samyukta Socialist Party, therefore, demands an immediate take over of these foreign assets.

Labour

1. The SSP believes in a vigorous, united trade union movement, and it will spare no efforts to bring the entire working

class movement within the fold of a single organization based on democratic principles.

2. Trade union unity will increase tremendously the bargaining power of the working class and give workers' actions a new, fighting edge.

3. The SSP will reform and reorganise the trade union movement, root out corruption, fight anti-political isolationist attitudes, and insist on proper internal elections.

4. In the sphere of labour policy the SSP will give the working class a fair deal by implementing a series of progressive measures which will include:

- (a) appointment of separate wage boards for various industries in the organised sector;
- (b) setting up of minimum wage committees to cover the unorganised sector;
- (c) linking dearness allowance with the cost of living to neutralise the rise in prices;
- (d) implementing vigorously all labour laws in the public sector;
- (e) revising the code of conduct rules for Government and semi-government employees; and
- (f) passing of a comprehensive legislation providing for:
 - (i) compulsory recognition of unions;
 - (ii) periodic balloting by workers to settle disputes over the representative status of rival unions;
 - (iii) prohibition of strike-breaking activities;
 - (iv) security of employment and protection from arbitrary suspensions and determination of service;
 - (v) a minimum trade union membership of one per cent of workers monthly income;
- (g) amendment of the Bonus Act on the basis of the majority report of the Bonus Commission, with certain progressive modifications and its application to all commercial undertakings in the public sector also; and
- (h) providing of on-the-spot training and increasing recruitment of managerial cadres, from among the ranks of the working class.

5. The SSP shall formulate schemes of old age pensions and unemployment benefits so as to cover gradually the entire population.

VII

SOCIAL PROGRAMME

Abolition of Caste

1. The struggle against inequality in India has another dimension. The fight for political and economic equality must also extend to the social realm. The class struggle against feudal-capitalist exploitation can only succeed if it is coupled with the struggle for social equality.

2. It should be remembered that equality and equal opportunity are not synonymous. In a society characterised by a hierarchical structure based on birth, the principle of equal opportunity cannot produce an equal society. The established, conventional notion about merit and ability must result in denial of opportunities in actual practice for backward castes, harijans, adivasis etc. The principle of preferential opportunities alone will ensure that the backward sections will catch up with the advanced ones in a reasonable period of time.

3. The notion of backwardness needs to be defined. The primary test is, of course, a social one: What is the traditional ranking and status of a particular group in the hierarchy of castes? But educational advance, economic position, and political power are also relevant considerations. Since backwardness is by nature a relative concept, it has to be applied in a dynamic manner. It may so happen that what is a backward group today may in the course of time not only improve its lot but in the process begin to exhibit attitudes characteristic of the upper castes. It may at that stage even start opposing the principle of preferential opportunities and defend the status quo.

4. At present the backward category must be deemed to include the harijans, the adivasis, the backward sections of the Hindu community, women, as also the unprivileged sector of

minority communities. In terms of percentages this category today constitutes 80 per cent, or more of the total population.

5. The struggle against economic exploitation and for economic equality; for a ceiling on income and re-division of land; against the exploitative use of the English language by the English-knowing; and for a rapid rate of economic growth will of course powerfully help the creation of an equal society. But this must be paralleled by a deliberate policy of providing special opportunities for the backward sections. This principle must also be defined concretely; it must mean reservation of upwards of 60 per cent seats in all spheres for people from these sections.

6. The weakness of the people's movement in our country is largely the result of:

- (i) the preponderance of upper caste leadership in our major political parties, and
- (ii) the sectional, isolationist character of the organisations of scheduled castes, adivasis etc. The SSP must fulfill the need of a party which will free the movement from the twin evils of sectionalism and upper caste dominance.

7. A serious application of this principle by the Party and the acquisition of a broad liberal outlook by party activists, upper caste by birth, will not only create a sense of confidence among the backward sections and induce them to regard it as their party, but give a tremendous fillip to the process of radicalisation.

8. The SSP will, as an earnest of its intentions in this regard make a beginning by applying this principle

- (a) in the formation of party committees, and
- (b) in distributing tickets for elections to representative bodies like the Municipalities, Assemblies and the Lok Sabha.

9. Special hostel facilities, scholarships and free text-books etc. should be provided for backward class students, including girl students.

Education

1. Illiteracy shall be eliminated within a period of ten years

and a literacy army shall be recruited to accomplish this task on a war footing.

2. Educational system shall be overhauled. Emphasis shall be on technical and scientific education, research and acquisition of real knowledge as against superficial command of languages.

3. Educational opportunities shall be extended if need be by introducing morning and evening shifts. The principle of preferential opportunities in services etc. shall not mean denial of educational opportunities for any one.

4. National laboratories and research shall be thoroughly re-organised and the existing facilities used for effective application of science to industry and fabrication of small unit machines with a view to:

- (a) increased employment,
- (b) decentralisation, and
- (c) rural development.

5. No state aid to educational institutions which have denominational names.

6. Discrimination between the pay scales, amenities etc. of Govt. school teachers and the private school teachers shall be ended.

Primary Education

1. Primary education shall not only be free and compulsory but also equal. All special primary schools shall be abolished.

Women and Youths

1. Socialist planning should accord top priority to the building of Wardha type latrines and to provision of clean tap water in the villages to alleviate the suffering of rural women.

2. The Government shall sponsor series of youth centres, promote sports and physical culture so that India's performance at the Olympics perceptibly improves.

3. Inter-*Varna* marriage should be deemed a qualification for Government employment, Inter-dining among Government servants twice a year should be made compulsory.

The Language Policy

1. The question of language must be viewed from the standpoint of the people.

2. The SSP is in favour of an immediate abolition of English from public life. It is opposed to the use of English as a medium of administration and instruction for several reasons.

3. First of all it is a totally foreign language and is not and will never be comprehensible except to an insignificant minority of our people.

4. The continued use of English makes rapid spread of education difficult, saps the students' energies in mastering the onerous job of learning a foreign tongue; puts a premium on turns of phrases at the expense of real knowledge; perpetuates the domination of a ruling class with a shrinking base, and effectively shuts off the masses from the active participation in public affairs. Besides, it is a constant reminder of our national humiliation and breeds a feeling of inferiority among the vast majority and an attitude of contemptuous arrogance in the infinitesimally small minority.

5. Abolition of English is a democratic demand. The principle of reorganisation of states on the basis of language assumes the immediate introduction of Indian languages for public purposes in these States. Without this basic reform linguistic reorganisation becomes an essay in futility.

6. The language system must be evolved on the following basis :

- (a) At the State level regional languages shall replace English as the medium of administration, education and the High Court and other courts.
Use of Hindi shall be optional in non-Hindi areas.
- (b) In the Hindi-speaking areas Hindi shall replace English as the medium of instruction and administration.
- (c) At the Union level also Hindi shall replace English (in all Union departments) in Hindi areas. English may be used for Union purposes by the people of the non-Hindi States should they so desire. The SSP would however like the use of regional languages in Union Offices and Union work in non-Hindi areas and the immediate abolition of English.

The SSP wishes to make it clear that there is no question of imposing Hindi on the non-Hindi regions.

- (d) Hindi and regional languages shall replace English in the teleprinter service. The Government and its various agencies should cease advertising in English language daily newspapers and divert the resources thus saved for building up the language press.
- (e) There should be a few central universities in non-Hindi states where the medium of instruction would be Hindi.
- (f) English shall not be a compulsory subject of study in schools and colleges. Lack of knowledge of English shall not debar a person from holding the highest public office in the land.
- (g) The SSP rejects the theory of cultivating English as the exclusive window on the world. It would encourage learning of other languages like Russian, Japanese, Chinese, Spanish, German, etc., as optional subjects and promote direct translation from these sources into Indian languages.
- (h) The SSP wants the system of simultaneous translation in Parliament to be extended to regional languages so that non-Hindi speaking members may be induced to speak in their mother-tongue.

Only by actually using Indian languages in all fields can they be enriched. To wait for their enrichment is to ensure that they will never be used. In the opinion of the SSP Indian languages, with their heritage of Sanskrit, Persian, etc., have the potentiality of becoming great languages. What is required is their continuous use for the modern purposes.

Adivasis

1. Adivasis shall be freed from the existing onerous forest laws, harassment by forest officers and police and made co-sharers in and responsible for proper forest management.

2. Adivasis' right to collect fire wood, leaves etc. shall be respected.

3. Adivasi lands which were formerly under the plough and which have been incorporated into forest zones shall be returned to them.

4. Adivasis and harijans shall be given preference in colonising lands newly reclaimed or brought under the plough.

5. Adivasis and harijans shall be provided with new housing sites.

Community Development

The present fraud of community development, which involves excessive expenditure on beaurocratic waste and administrative over-heads shall be ended, and a new system of rural aid will be introduced to help the poorer sections of the peasantry.

All forms of rural co-operation shall be encouraged by positive action on the part of the state.

VIII

THE PROBLEM OF CORRUPTION IN HIGH PLACES

At the end of 1963, Mr. Gulzarilal Nanda, the then Home Minister, who had been elevated to this important office under the Kamaraj Plan, announced with great fanfare that he would make a determined effort to tackle the problem of corruption in high places, and that if he should fail to make a definitive impact he would give up the high office which he had accepted.

To help eradicate corruption and improve the moral climate in the country, the Minister also took the lead in organising Sadachar Samitis under the auspices of Bharat Sewak Samaj and Bharat Sadhu Samaj.

The past three years however have shown that in terms of concrete achievements and formulation of policies conducive to clean administration and honest business transactions, the record of the Government has been wholly negative. Not only Mr. Nanda did not make any impact on the problem but was himself unceremoniously thrown out of office. Weakness in this anti-corruption Minister proved to be fatal!

The high level committee on prevention of corruption headed by Mr. Santhanam had suggested formation of a Vigilance Commission to deal with the problem of corruption in the services and a national panel to examine charges against Ministers whenever made by more than 10 members of the legislatures. The Committee said, 'we consider that the appropriate course would be for the President to constitute on the advice of the Prime Minister a national panel whenever allegations against a Minister are required to be enquired into, an ad-hoc committee should be selected out of this national panel by the President It should be the duty of the Committee to ascertain whether there is a *prima facie* case. The Committee should have the power to direct the Central Bureau of Investigation, in suitable

cases, to investigate and report.'

During the period 1963-66, memoranda were submitted to the President or the Prime Minister against no less than 6 Chief Ministers namely, those of Punjab, Orissa, Kashmir, Bihar, Rajasthan and Mysore and also against the Central Finance Minister, Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari. In fact two memoranda each have been submitted against the Chief Minister of Bihar and Rajasthan!

The charges against Mr. Kairon were very grave and they were also being made persistently by the leaders of the United Front and several other public figures in Punjab and it was with very great reluctance that late Prime Minister Nehru agreed to refer those charges to a one-man-Enquiry Commission under the former Chief Justice, Mr. Das.

The Das Commission submitted its findings to the Government after the death of Mr. Nehru, and the Congress High Command, in view of the Commission's conclusions that the Punjab Chief Minister was guilty of impropriety, persuaded Mr. Kairon to resign as the Chief Minister of the State.

In the case of Orissa's Chief Minister, Mr. Biren Mitra and the former Chief Minister, Mr. Biju Patnaik, a different procedure was adopted.

The C.B.I., under the Central Home Ministry, was asked to examine the various files and documents and on the strength of their report a Cabinet Sub-Committee held that the two Orissa Government leaders had departed from the standards that responsible public workers were expected to maintain and relieved them of their official responsibility.

In regard to the charges against the Chief Ministers of Mysore and Bihar the Home Minister after asking the two Chief Ministers to send their replies to the charges made, declared that no *prima facie* case had been made out against them and decided not to proceed further in the matter. In the meantime a charge-sheet was framed against the former Finance Minister, Mr. Krishnamachari and the President was asked to set afoot an independent judicial inquiry into the allegations made by 11 members of Parliament.

The late Prime Minister, Mr. Shastri, suggested a new procedure, namely that he seek the private opinion of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court on the question as to whether the

signatories to the memorandum had been able to make out a preliminary case against the Finance Minister before making up his mind, a procedure which Mr. Krishnamachari strongly objected to. He said that relationship between the Finance Minister and the Prime Minister was so close that the decision as to whether a *prima facie* case has been made should not be left to an outsider, but that the Prime Minister should do on his own responsibility decide the matter. He went a step further and asserted that even if there was a shread of suspicion in the mind of the Prime Minister about his colleague holding an important portfolio, it would be best for him to drop him out of the Government altogether. Since Mr. Shastri did not agree to this, Mr. Krishnamachari chose to resign from his office.

In the winter session of Parliament a demand was made for probes by parliamentary committees into the charges against Mr. Patil, Sardar Swaran Singh, Mr. Manubhai Shah and Mr. Sachin Choudhari. The demand was turned down by the speaker. He said it was for the Prime Minister to institute an enquiry.

It will be seen from these different cases and from the different procedures adopted to deal with them that even in such an important matter as the question of corruption in high places, the Government, despite its brave pronouncements, had failed to evolve clearly defined principles and had allowed personal, group and party considerations to influence Governmental decisions in the matter.

During the last two years several questions were asked of the Government, honest answers to which would have gone a long way in evolving effective measures for eradicating favouritism, nepotism and bribery in the higher echelons of the Government. It was suggested that all near relations of the Ministers and the civil servants of the secretarial rank, who are only one generation removed from these Ministers or high officials, should not be issued any permit or licence.

An attempt was also made to make the Government stick to the policy of not allowing retired civil servants to take jobs in the private sector since such an inter-mingling of personnel was bound to lead to favouritism and corruption. Similarly, in order to safeguard the independence of the judiciary, the opposition wanted the Government to adopt the convention of not appointing judges to diplomatic and ministerial posts, and of utilising

their services only in judicial capacity. The fact is that the Government was reluctant to lay down firm principles or guidelines or evolve objective tests for judging when enquiries into charges of corruption made against the Ministers called for.

Even the suggestion that there should be an independent board to examine all applications for permits and licences did not meet with approval from the Government.

As the aforesaid cases make it clear, it was the play of the political forces that decided the course of action adopted by the Government in the past. Because the Home Minister did not get on with the Orissa leaders, he did not hesitate to use the instrument of C.B.I. for looking into the charges made against them. It is also widely believed that the leakage of the C.B.I. report was not accidental but a deliberate leak by the circle around the Home Minister. •

There was no enquiry against Mr. Krishna Vallabh Sahay, the Bihar Chief Minister, largely because he belonged to the same faction as the late Prime Minister and enjoyed his confidence and patronage. If the late Prime Minister thought it necessary to consult privately the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court before finally making up his mind about the *prima facie* case against his own colleague in the Central Government, why did he not apply the same test to the memorandum against the Bihar Chief Minister and seek independent judicial opinion on the question of whether a preliminary case had been made out against the Bihar Chief Minister? If the C.B.I. could look into the charges against Mr. Biren Mitra and Biju Patnaik, why could the Prime Minister or the Home Minister not direct the C.B.I. to examine all the papers and documents relevant for the purpose of establishing the truth or otherwise of the charges against the Mysore Chief Minister and the Rajasthan Chief Minister? This has emboldened Mr. Krishna Vallabh Sahay even to challenge the authority of the President and Prime Minister to inquire into these charges and take action on the basis of the report of this inquiry.

The graveman of the charge against the Finance Minister was that he used his ministerial position to advance the interest of the firms with which his sons and he himself were connected and that he had manipulated import controls and licencing regulations to favour Krishnamachari & Co. and other allied firms.

A perusal of the summary of charges made against the Bihar, Rajasthan and Mysore Chief Ministers would prove that these charges are equally grave and a preliminary examination by a person with a judicial and independent bent of mind would have been very proper. The failure of the Government to apply identical procedures in tackling similar cases was due to the fact that they were never serious about the so-called drive against corruption at the top levels of the administration.

The drive of the Finance Ministry and its investigating agencies, namely the Enforcement Directorate under Foreign Exchange Regulations and the investigating agency of the Income Tax Department has come to a sorry pass because of the lack of firm direction, hesitation in taking action against the high ranking officials and the pressures exerted by the various Ministers in behalf of those businessmen who had been guilty of amassing unaccounted money and assets in foreign currencies in India and abroad. Mr. Sachin Chowdhury's intervention at the instance of the Solicitors with whom he was associated for 30 years in the work of the Enforcement Directorate is blatant example of this kind of interference. It was not as if the Government did not have adequate powers to deal with the problem effectively. The various acts on the statute book plus the amendments to the Income Tax Act and the Company Act have clothed that the Government does not have the will to take unpleasant decisions and resist political pressures from vested interests. With the approach of the elections and the well-known dependence of the ruling party on company contributions (out of a total contribution of Rs. 11 million as much as Rs. 10.5 million went to the Congress party) and private donations by business people it was impossible for the Congress Party to vigorously carry out its drive against black money. Another important factor was the inadequacy of the ministerial instrument of this anti-black money drive. If Mr. Krishnamachari's position had not been seriously compromised by his involvement in his sons' business and his use of power in their favour and if his conduct had been entirely above board, and; further, if he had been backed by the whole Government collectively, things probably would have been different. But neither was the Minister nor his actions above board, now was the Government serious about the anti-black money drive and the campaign against corruption in high places.

While the Government leaders go on talking about socialism day in and day out, their attitude towards the question of property has nothing whatever to do with their socialist professions. If investigation in the current assets, incomes and expenditures of the present day Government leaders, civil servants and businessmen and their living standards and wealth 19 years ago, is made, it would be absolutely clear that the present decline is due to the departure of these people from the high standards set by Mahatma Gandhi. This love of property, of wealth, of ostentation and of superfluous consumption is a scandal. If part of the property of public leaders and Ministers is not nationalised and firm principles are not laid down, the problem of corruption and unaccounted money can never be solved. The present Government is incapable of undertaking these radical measures. The SSP, therefore, suggests the following 4-point programme to eradicate corruption:

1. There shall be independent judicial inquiries into charges of corruption against Ministers whenever they are proffered by more than 10 legislators.
2. There shall be a ban on the civil servants' taking jobs in private companies upon retirements.
3. No Judge or former Judge of the High Court and Supreme Court shall be appointed to any office in the State except in their judicial capacity.
4. No application of any relative of any Minister or civil servant of the secretarial rank, one generation removed, shall be considered for granting of licence, permit etc.

IX

DEFENCE POLICY

The problem of India's defence must be viewed in the context of the changed political conditions in Asia and the world and the continuing revolution in technology and the weapons of destruction.

In the heyday of imperialism the security system organised by the British in this part of the world was geared to the supreme need of defending Britain's imperial interests in India. The chain of naval bases, military outposts and network of dependencies and protectorates was designed to secure the lines of communications to this most treasured imperial possession and ensuring its outer defences against the real or imagined threat of Napoleonic France, Czarist and Soviet Russia and resurgent Japan.

The pivot of this whole defence system was Britain's direct political rule in India. This old system collapsed as a result of the withdrawal of British power from this region. The context is no longer one of passive local populations and rival imperialisms contending for supremacy but that of sovereign, independent States.

The break-up of the British Empire in India and the Indo-Chinese peninsula into various 'successor States' has created new security problems for each individual State as well as the entire region. The tide of nationalism has swept away the old imperial system but has not put a new rational structure in its place.

The period immediately following the achievement of freedom was in many respects a crucial period. It was a time of flux, of change. Thanks to its ancient heritage and Mahatma Gandhi, India enjoyed great prestige abroad, specially among the subject peoples of the world. It was then in a position to influence the course of events in the neighbouring areas.

Missed Opportunity

There are always periods when historical developments can be given a new turn, which are then followed by others during which international relations get congealed into rigid moulds. It is not possible to change the direction of policy so easily once this has happened nor quickly cancel the consequences of past policies. The later 'forties were one such period in history. The rapid erosion of imperialism had for the first time put initiative into the hands of the forces of social revolution. The polarisation of the world around the two big powers had not yet assumed terrifying proportions, nor had the free Asian States been sucked up into any system of military alliances linked with the two power blocs. Nehru, as free India's first Prime Minister, could have brought into existence a new pattern of international relations in South Asia and organised a security system effective yet completely free from entanglements with the Atlantic and Soviet blocs. He, however, threw away these great opportunities.

It is true that the Indian effort at a revolutionary reconstruction of the security system was beset with many difficulties. The partition of the country did not solve any problem. It only complicated the task of India's defence and vitiated its international relations. What was at best a temporary expedient accepted under duress, was clothed by the Congress leaders with absolute finality. It provided the foreign powers with an excuse for meddling in the Indo-Pakistan disputes and playing off one State against the other.

Further it saddled India from the start with a very heavy defence burden. The Kashmir war of 1947-48 cost us a great deal both in terms of lives and money. Its abrupt end and the signing of the cease-fire under foreign pressure left a big chunk of the Kashmir State in the hands of Pakistan. The cease-fire line, too, was irrational; it left India's initial lines of communications with Kashmir and Ladakh unprotected. The link-up of Pakistan with the United States and West-Asian and South-East Asian military pacts has enabled it to maintain a defence machine which Pakistan's economy would not have been able to sustain by itself. The increase in Pakistan's defence forces compelled India to augment its own expenditure on arms and equipment. Thus all the elements of an arms race on a smaller scale

were introduced, seriously crippling India's foreign policy initiative and putting a drag on its economic development.

This was precisely the objective of the United States' intervention in Indo-Pakistan relations. Cunningly using the anti-Indian proclivities of the Pakistan politicians, Americans dangled before them the prospect of increasing the fighting strength of their armies *vis-à-vis* India. Thereby they completed their encirclement of the Soviet block and simultaneously put a check on India's freedom of action and industrial development, making it dependent on the U.S. for foreign aid.

Only iron determination and will could have enabled India to defeat these machinations. But Nehru's India showed little inclination to move away from the traditional British patterns in the matter of foreign policy and defence.

That the quiescent Himalayan frontier would soon come to life in view of the upheaval in China should have been obvious to any discerning person. A courageous Prime Minister would have pursued vigorously the twin policies of helping the Himalayan States achieve their freedom from foreign tutelage as well as liberation from the shackles of local feudalism. The first Indian Prime Minister flatly refused to accord the status of a free State to Tibet or to actively support democratic changes in Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim. The disastrous policy brought the Chinese menace to the doorstep of this country.

All this, of course, relates to past actions and it might be asked how discussion of these errors helps the solution of our current difficulties. The answer is that only egotistic politicians restrict their vision to their own tenure of office. The act of statesmanship, however, consists in thinking in terms of long-term objectives. When we discuss the security problems of any country we do so not in a vacuum but in relation to the possible threats to its security. We ask from what quarters does the threat of aggression emanate. For it is our estimate of these aggressive designs that will define the tasks of our defence forces, and determine the sufficiency or otherwise of our arms.

Clearly India does not envisage any armed conflict either with the Soviet Union or the United States. Apart from the fact that we have friendly relations with both, it would be fantastic to think in terms of matching their arms with ours. India just cannot do so in the foreseeable future, even if it should want to do

it. Both these big powers today are strong enough to destroy one another and so there can be no question of their capacity to destroy us also.

Realistically speaking, apart from these two big states, there is scarcely a power which can start full scale military operations against another sovereign power, operations leading to total victory, without provoking the instant intervention by these two super powers. If these powers are in agreement they will hasten to cry a halt to these operations. If they are ranged on opposite sides it cannot but lead to a world war.

The Chinese attack on our northern borders in October, 1962 and the sudden unilateral withdrawal of the Chinese forces, though claimed to be not in response to the pressure of the two super powers, brought out the truth of this statement. The withdrawal was in the main motivated by a desire to avoid involvement in any large scale conflict with these big powers. The Soviet Union, it soon became clear, did not look with favour upon the continuance of the military operations by China and, as to the United States, with the advance of the Chinese forces their intervention seemed imminent.

During the outbreak of the Indo-Pakistani conflict earlier in Kutch and later in Kashmir and other sectors of the western front in September 1965 again showed that the big powers were opposed to let a full-scale war take place between the two. This time both the Soviet intervention and the American intervention in favour of cessation of hostilities was both strong and insistent. Political, diplomatic and military pressure was freely applied, and economic sanctions, too, were invoked to secure a cease-fire between India and Pakistan.

In the present international conflict neither the defeat of the Indian arms in the border war with China in 1962 nor the so-called victory of India over Pakistan in 1965 can be termed decisive in any way. The ultimate *political* reverses sustained by India in both cases were the result mainly of our policies and primarily of the lack of a firm national will.

The Indian defence efforts must be geared not only to the needs of securing our frontiers from future Chinese and Pakistani attacks, but also to the ultimate national goal of recovering our lost territories. This is basically a contest of political and national will, and only secondarily a question of sufficiency

or otherwise of our arms. Our foreign and defence policy failures are to be traced to the absence of firm national purpose and economic stagnation resulting in an inadequacy of our security arrangements. Unless these basic weaknesses are overcome the national goal of re-establishing the country's 1947 borders cannot be reached.

If India's defence were to rest, wholly or even primarily, on the concept of matching the terms of our adversaries in all sectors, we would be inviting only trouble for ourselves. For then the decision-making regarding the defence budget, purchase of weapons and equipment will be located not in New Delhi but in Karachi and, ultimately, in Washington.

The Main Problems

India's defence does not depend upon the relative modernity of its necessarily limited number of planes and tanks and other conventional but expensive weapons. They are an important element in any defence arrangements but not the most important or the only important element.

A sound defence policy will have four main elements: (1) clean national goals, (2) social cohesion; (3) economic dynamism; and (4) a relatively efficient fighting machine backed by a firm national will.

The national goals can only be (a) ending of the rift between India and Pakistan caused by partition, and (b) the restoration of Tibetan independence or, in the alternative, demarcation of our northern frontier along the lines of Kailas, Mansarovar and Brahmaputra. Of course, these goals cannot be achieved solely by military means. But we have first to formulate them before we can create a situation favourable for achieving them.

Meanwhile we have to address ourselves to the task of creating social cohesion and economic dynamism without which the mere purchase of modern weapons on a larger scale can be of little avail. Without these, again, to seek refuge in the "atom bomb" as the ultimate solution of our difficulties would spell disaster.

It has always been the absence of social cohesion and national feeling which has made India such an easy prey to foreign

invasion and conquest. The nineteen years of freedom have not basically altered these alarming features of our defence situation. The centre has been holding national integration conferences, but the Government has been acting in a manner which undermines national unity. Unless the old social order is destroyed we cannot build up a new, integrated society. The domination of the old feudal elements, the bureaucratic class and the business community has to be ended. The fact that these elements of the ruling class are largely or wholly recruited from the upper castes has powerfully reinforced its position at the summit of our society.

The preponderance of these elements is also reflected in the officer cadres of our defence services. This cannot but weaken the effectiveness of our fighting machine. Unless public policy is based on the doctrine of equality in respect of property and personal expenditure, of special opportunities for the submerged sections, the common people's patriotic fervour cannot be roused.

Inequalities

In spite of socialist talk, inequalities have, instead of diminishing, grown in recent years, and the pursuit of naked self-interest has displaced idealism as the dominant motive in public life. Widespread corruption and self-seeking at all levels are the inevitable result of the fall in normal standards. Self-respect, courage and abnegation are no longer cultivated; flattery, cowardice and ostentatious living have taken their place. National disgrace or national suffering do not evoke sympathetic response; only regional sentiment and the traditional loyalties of religion and caste can move the people.

The growth of the population and the failure of economic opportunities even to keep pace with this growth has heightened internal tensions and fanned mutual hatred. What could have been an instrument of economic growth, that is, the unemployed youth, has been allowed to become a factor limiting economic development.

Ultimately it is the dynamism of the economy, its rate of growth and the volume of production that constitute the base of any country's defence capacity. Unless this base is widened

rapidly, our economy will not be able to meet the heavy demands made on it by the defence services in fulfilment of their national responsibility. The Defence Ministers have tried to assure that although the defence budget has shot up to Rs. 900 crores, in terms of national income or total governmental revenue the share of the defence expenditure was not excessive.

The juggling with figures leaves out of account the miserable condition of the masses, or the heavy loads which they have been forced to carry. Purely from the technical point of view, rapid economic development, especially of the sectors which produce strategic goods, becomes an urgent necessity. Insufficiency of our planning effort cannot but be a matter of deep concern in the context of the continuing threats to our security from the North, North-West and North-East.

There is another aspect of our external relations which has a direct bearing on the problem of defence.

Dependence for Arms on Foreign Powers

The Congress leaders who used to shout against British imperialism in the past, reversed their policies with regard to the Commonwealth on becoming the Government and have since remained the most ardent advocate of pro-British policies in all spheres of our national life. Whether in regard to foreign policy or defence arrangements, political and legal ideas or trade relations, literature or economic thought, cultural exchange or capital investment or medium of instruction and administration, British influence in India continues to be very potent. This is all the more pronounced in respect of our defence services. An acute military correspondent observed some time back:

“Apart from words of command, numbering perhaps a thousand, which are in Hindi, English is the forces’ medium of administration, operation and training. There is hardly a military manual translated in Hindi, and an overwhelming mass of services literature is still imported from Britain. In fact, a major obstacle in getting arms from countries other than Britain lies in the lack of familiarity with foreign tongues, excepting English.

Practically the entire fleet of the Indian Navy bears the im-

press of Britain; the striking power component of the I.A.F. is entirely British in origin; and the army, an extensive buyer of indigenous materials, contains many an item of British make. As weapons recurringly need servicing and maintenance components it would not be wrong to conclude that today the operational capability of the Indian military machine is deeply conditioned by British support."

This pathetic dependence of our defence services on the goodwill of a single foreign power must cause the greatest disquiet to all patriots. A country which desires to pursue a policy of non-alignment in the sphere of foreign policy must find from within itself the means of self-defence. It must achieve reasonable self-sufficiency within as short a period as possible. But if truth be told, India's record in this respect is pitiful.

Falsehood about Research

A great deal of falsehood surrounds our industrial effort both in the public and private sectors. All this talk about our manufacturing 80 per cent or 90 per cent of the parts of a particular product or piece of equipment is highly misleading. It creates the false impression that the country is becoming self-sufficient in respect of know-how, engineering experience and equipment, whereas the fact is that in respect of 'strategic goods' we continue to rely on imports for our requirement of key components. The recent propaganda about the manufacture of supersonic jet planes in India was nothing short of a huge fraud on the gullible public. We were never told which parts were wholly manufactured here and which were imported. There is no need to observe any secrecy about it. Manufacture of jet planes of these types is no longer a military secret; at least is no longer a secret as far as our opponents are concerned.

All the stories of our industrial performance are similarly tainted by falsehood. The reality is altogether different. The sense of purpose, the drive, the *elan* which alone can produce results is nowhere in evidence.

Unless this missing element is introduced no defence arrangements can give us security.

To talk of 'small arms' and a 'huge militia' as some do simply

because there is no 'dearth of manpower', makes no sense as an alternative or even as an auxiliary arrangement, unless this untapped manpower is fired by revolutionary zeal, and is welded into an army of national reconstruction. Once this zeal has been created—and only revolutionary social changes can create it—vast new perspectives open up, including the prospect of disarmament. But in the present context neither organisation for 'mass tactics and guerilla warfare' nor non-violent resistance has any relevance.

While it is the task of technicians and military leaders to keep the armed forces in as good a shape as possible, it is the job of political leaders to rouse the people and integrate them into a revolutionary force.

As already pointed out, there has been in recent years a sharp rise in India's defence budget in monetary terms. This constitutes a crushing burden on the poor people and, therefore, is a source of deep concern. But what makes the situation desperate is the feeling that even after spending these vast sums on our defence there cannot be any certainty about the degree of preparedness of our defence organisation. The Indian attitude to questions relating to our armed forces is a curious mixture of indifference and misplaced sentimentality. The non-violent and unwarlike background of the Indian political leaders has come in the way of a proper and objective understanding of the defence problems and the absence of compulsory military service has invested the dominant attitude with guilt consciousness and sentimentality. The approach is so uncritical that we have let a whole range of problems remain shrouded in secrecy. So little information is given to Parliament and the country by the Government that no intelligent estimate of the effectiveness and adequacy of our defence effort is at all possible. Only a Standing Committee of Parliament, assisted by specialists, will enable the people and Parliament to cut out dead wood, inefficiency and wasteful expenditure in our defence establishment. A permanent Standing Committee alone can send for documents, examine witnesses and closely scrutinise the working of the defence department. A general 10 hour discussion on defence estimates is scarcely the proper method of examining the defence estimates running to Rs. 900 crores. Inquiries that are made by the Public Accounts Committee are in the nature

of a *post mortem*, and, while its conclusion and recommendations are superficially accepted by the Government, no real improvement is effected and no built-in devices created to prevent recurrence of past mistakes.

The state of our defence industries and defence oriented enterprise is pitiful. No real information is available to the public and all manner of fantastic claims are put out by these enterprises which will not bear a searching examination by specialists. Like the general research in the country the military research, too, is largely bogus and there is little solid achievement in this vital sphere. Complaints are often being made of indigenous talent remaining unutilized and about favouritism and patronage. An overhaul of the research arrangements is called for. Proper criteria need to be evolved to measure objectively the achievement and failure. Altogether, the public and Parliament must be given more material, data, facts and information which will enable the country to acquire an insight into our defence problems. The SSP commits itself to these necessary changes.

X

FOREIGN POLICY

The principle of neutrality or non-alignment or non-involvement has been the dominant theme of Indian and Afro-Asian foreign policy. However the concept of neutrality has no fixed connotation. It means different things to different people. The isolationism of a strong power such as the United States in the 19th century is one variety of neutrality. It was the basic tenet of American policy not to get involved in the national and dynastic conflicts of Europe and to compel Europe likewise to keep out of the Americas. Protected by the wide expanse of the Atlantic in the East and the Pacific in the West the Americans desired to be left alone to work out their own destiny. American isolationism, however, did not mean a break from the heritage of European civilization. Theirs was a reaction against religious bigotry and political oppression which the emigrants had found insufferable in their ancestral lands.

Neutrality of the Weak

Neutrality is very often the characteristic attitude of militarily weak powers who refrain from political alliances and conflicts in the hope of being left unmolested by big powers. Such a neutrality does not imply either a withdrawal from the wider cultural orbit of a civilization. A neutral country's exchange in goods and ideas with the countries belonging to a competing bloc or blocs continues. The security of such neutral powers is ever precarious, and it is only extreme good luck and the force of tradition that saves them, if at all, from ultimate involvement with the international struggle for power. Switzerland and, to an extent Sweden are illustrative of this kind of neutrality. While Swiss neutrality was respected even by the Nazis and is being respected

by the Atlantic and the Communist blocs as well, it cannot be said that in terms of its social system and culture Switzerland is not a part of the Western World. Clearly its neutrality has relevance in terms of traditional military conflicts only.

Neutrality: Product of Military Stalemate

In the course of the struggle between giant powers and rival blocs, situations do arise when militarily the two antagonistic forces are evenly balanced, and so a stalemate results necessitating arrangements calculated to soften the conflict, at least temporarily, in selected danger zones where the influence of the competing blocs converge. Belgium constituted such a dangerous area during the long period of Franco-German conflict when Flanders was the historic battle-field of Western Europe. The Belgian neutrality was not so much a product of the deliberate exercise of choice by the people of Belgium as a convenient arrangement imposed by the statesmen of big powers with a view to reducing tension and minimizing the possibility of military contest among rival powers.

A somewhat different instance of neutrality is furnished by the Franco-Spain and Turkey during the World War II, when the clever politicians at the helm of these weak states played off one great block against the other by exploiting the reluctance of these already extended coalitions to take on new commitments and open new fronts. Both these small powers managed to stay out of war till the very end by skilfully playing their cards and taking maximum advantage of the then existing relation of military forces and internal jealousies and suspicions in the warring camps.

Post-War Pattern

What was an exceptional outcome of the peculiar situation of World War II has now become a generalized pattern in this post-war world when the military struggle between the Atlantic and the Communist system has reached a virtual stalemate. A clue to the understanding of this feature of the post-war world is to be found in (1) the development of the mortally destructive thermo-nuclear weapons and the means of delivering them to

any target on this wide earth with reasonable accuracy; (2) the rise of a number of sovereign states in Asia and Africa as a result of the insurgence of nationalism and rapid decline of imperialism in these areas; and (3) the existence of a number of sensitive areas where the conflict between the power blocs threatens to upset the delicate balance such as Laos.

Neutrality of Manoeuvre

The memories of the imperialist domination have not completely faded from the minds of the people of these newly freed Afro-Asian countries. The continued economic exploitation of these peoples by the Western powers and the increasingly widening gulf between the living standards of the erstwhile masters and erstwhile subjects, of which the realisation is daily being brought home to them by the newspapers, the films and the radio, only fans the latent resentment against the Atlantic powers. In such a situation the ruling groups in these countries find that a policy of neutrality, of non-alignment, is a necessity imposed by the exigencies of power-politics. The problem of controlling the masses in an age where the pretences of representative government have to be maintained and where even the basic necessities of life cannot be satisfied by the state, the ruling group, if it is to retain its privileges and powers, needs must resort to a neutrality of manoeuvre in international affairs. Having no desire to bring about a social revolution in their own countries, (for such a revolution would make a clean sweep of all vested interests), they cannot win enthusiastic support of their people for their policies and so in order to avoid reprisals from world communism and with a view to weakening the appeal of their domestic communist party, these powers deliberately adopt the policy of playing off the two world giants. This neutrality of manoeuvre takes varied forms; sometimes it speaks a cosmopolitan language and offers its services as an honest broker in the great power conflict as in the case of Nehru India or to a lesser degree in the case of post-Nehru India. Not unoften it serves to further some specific regional objective of a militant state such as Nasser's Egypt.

A Revolutionary Neutrality

Whatever the idiom which this neutrality of manoeuvre may from time to time choose it is fundamentally different from the revolutionary neutrality of a people engaged in a basic transformation of its social relations and institutions, a neutrality which proclaims the irrelevance of all the existing systems and of the conflicts between these systems and invites the peoples of the world to participate in the creative endeavour of building up a new civilization. The attitude of Lenin towards the conflict of the allied and central powers in 1917 was of this type. Backed by a revolutionary social experiment at home, the Russian foreign policy in its early stages made a shattering impact on the world. In spite of the claims put forth by the official spokesman for India's foreign policy it is obvious that India has made no such impact on international affairs. The reason is not far to seek. The Congress government was not and is not a revolutionary government; although the word revolution is more often used in India than elsewhere, it has been divested of all real significance in this country and rendered thoroughly harmless. Indian official programmes and five year plans are clothed in radical phraseology but the socialism that they wish to establish co-exists happily with not a severely limited private sector but an expanding one, where the tendencies towards economic concentration, vertical and horizontal, are pronounced. Foreign capital is safe and receives encouragement at the hands of the government. Economic and social inequalities daily accentuate. The public sector bureaucracy, the political leadership and the propertied interests in the country have all become fused into one of the most rapacious ruling classes in the world. In the nineteen years of its independent existence, official India has had no message to give to the world. Its talk of spiritual values deceives no one. Its Buddha-Jayanti and Gandhi-Jayanti celebrations are not even an effective veil of hypocrisy. Life in India has plumb-ed the lowest depths, and the only message that was India's to give has been repudiated by the epigoni of Mahatma Gandhi although countless numbers of Africans, American Negroes and even Europeans are demonstrating on their own the efficacy of Mahatmaji's weapon of civil disobedience in this age of high-power rockets and deadly thermo-nuclear devices. India's policy

of non-alignment is a lacklustre policy, and even on such an obvious and basic issue as the ending of colonialism, the initiative had to be taken by Khrushchev and his successors in order to persuade the United Nations to adopt a declaration on this subject. How moderate and uninspiring the Indian programme is illustrated by the fact that it conforms admirably with the specifics prescribed in recent years by the Kennedy-Johnson administrations in the matter of socio-economic reforms in Latin-American and other countries. The limits of these reforms are clearly set: the reforms are directed mostly towards the vestiges of feudalism and antiquated methods of government. They involve mild agrarian and fiscal reforms and adjustments in the administrative structure and nothing more. They do not touch the property relations; on the contrary they take every measure to strengthen the hold of property ideologically as well as practically. If any reform movement crosses these limits and starts nationalising foreign companies, it becomes immediately unfriendly, as has been shown by Cuba.

Dividends for the Ruling Class

The real meaning of Indian neutrality is patent to all except the most purblind. It is based on political alignment with the British Commonwealth, the membership of the sterling bloc, the purchase of military arms and stores from particular countries, dependence for economic aid on the Aid India Club whose members are very much aligned with one particular system. India is neutral only in the sense that it has avoided formal entanglement with military blocs, that in the United Nations it sometimes backs the Atlantic countries and sometimes the Communist ones, that its leaders want to be recognised by posterity as peace-makers and mediators in the current world conflicts. Thanks to the military stalemate in the Soviet-Atlantic struggles, thanks further to the geographical position of India, the extent of its territory and the vastness of its population, India's neutrality of manoeuvre has brought rich dividends for the ruling classes. It is, therefore, no surprise that Mr. Ghanashyamdas Birla is amongst the most enthusiastic supporters of India's foreign policy. The Americans and others have become reconciled to it; they have proffered enough economic aid to lubricate India's

creaking economy. And by securing the Soviet goodwill it has virtually emasculated the local Communist Party. The Indian neutrality has fostered a wide-spread illusion about the so-called progressive wing in the governing party which must be supported at any cost if India's relapse into reaction is to be avoided. With such a belief India's Communists resigned from their role as an effective opposition and were thereby split into two warring camps.

Five Reasons

But of course these are special Indian conditions. India is a potentially big country, and could have played a different role if it had elected to do so. But most of the newly freed countries can never hope to fill a large part in world affairs. What then are the reasons that have impelled these industrially backward states to take to a policy of non-alignment?

These reasons are five in number. The first one is that this policy produces all the advantages in terms of aid without inviting foreign military control or interference implicit in adhesion to a system of military alliances.

Secondly, military alliance with a giant power inevitably leads to a disproportionately large defence establishment which the national economy cannot sustain without recurring doses of foreign military assistance. In its turn this increases the importance of the military in domestic affairs and must sooner or later provoke a full-fledged army rule and destruction of civil liberties as the experience of Thailand, Korea and Pakistan has conclusively demonstrated.

Thirdly, military allies of a giant power, if weak, soon came to be taken for granted. The neutrals, however, are constantly wooed and made fuss over.

Fourthly, neutrality confers on the power practising its freedom of action which can be used for great ends as well as for the more pedestrian object of winning larger concessions from the two sides.

Lastly, it helps a country, as has been explained above, throw a *cordon sanitaire* round its domestic politics, reduce internal tensions and save it from being sucked into the vortex of international conflicts.

Neutralisation Solution

There is another aspect of neutrality which the present military stalemate has brought into prominence. In the contemporary world neutralisation, although initially pooh-poohed by the great powers, is increasingly being accepted as the effective formula for settling explosive Soviet-Atlantic conflicts. Only twelve years ago Stalin and Mao Tse Tung had pontifically declared that there could be no neutrality between the socialist camp and the imperialist camp. And it was not very long ago that John Foster Dulles had denounced neutrality between freedom and totalitarianism as an immoral thing. Nevertheless both parties signed the Austrian Peace Treaty on the basis of neutralisation. And again both Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Chou En lai agreed that Laos should be transformed into a neutral state. The Russian "troika" arrangement extends formal recognition to the principle of neutrality. It needs no prophet to say that in the ultimate analysis the solution to the problems of Korea, Vietnam and even Germany will have to be sought out on a not dissimilar basis. India could have forcefully suggested these solutions in the very first years of its entry into international politics. But unfortunately it has failed to play a creative role in the councils of the world. If Mr. Khrushchev and his successors can boldly project new policies on the world stage, why cannot India demand a radical reorganization of the United Nations, enfranchisement of all subject peoples, abolition of the veto and the international caste system, direct elections to world parliament with weighted representation etc? But such a dynamic conception of neutrality cannot be squared with the passive neutrality of a small state or the neutrality of manoeuvre of the Nehru and post-Nehru Indians. It involves the larger question of the nation's goals, true conception of its place and role in history. Free India has yet to discover its own mind. It cannot do this if it is content to let one man to do its thinking for itself as it did during the long Nehru era.

It is in this larger historical perspective that the effectiveness of India's foreign policy in advancing the national interest or promoting the cause of mankind has to be measured.

Viewed in this context India's foreign policy in the last 20 years will appear to be a long essay in futility.

This policy has not advanced India's security nor the cause of freedom and democracy in Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim and in the northern parts of India. It has similarly been unable to safeguard the interests of overseas Indians in Fiji, Guinea, Mauritius, East Africa, Ceylon and other areas.

India under Congress rule has not raised a single issue of world significance in any international forum since 1949, neither the question of world freedom nor of world poverty nor of the growing disparity between the rich nations and the poor, nor of the abolition of nuclear monopoly, nor the United Nations' classification of permanent and non-permanent security Council members. Non-alignment as practised and interpreted by the Government has become a meaningless formula shorn of all positive content so that Asian and African states have not hesitated to extend it to India-China conflict!

The Congress Government's (a) evasion on the issue of removal of statues of foreigners from public places on the ground that it would displease the British Government and bring on it the opprobrium of chauvinism (b) continuance of the use of a foreign tongue as the medium of administration and instruction in the name of bogus cosmopolitanism and (c) its growing dependence on foreign powers have robbed Indian foreign policy of all initiative and dynamism.

It was this timidity and dependence on foreign countries that prevented India from championing fearlessly the cause of Algerian and Kenyan independence.

Throughout Asia and Africa it is no longer Gandhi's India that is looked upon as the harbinger of revolution but communist China. India's humiliating defeat at the hands of the Chinese and its constant appeasement of the aggressor have made this country an object of contempt throughout the world.

The Congress Government's continued talk about moral values and non-violence, its unwillingness and incapacity to experiment with unilateral disarmament on the one hand and use of armed force by it in actual practice on the other have made it look hypocritical in the eyes of international opinion.

It has also messed up the question of diplomatic recognition. While conceding that recognition has nothing to do with ideological affinity or approval but alone records the fact of effective control over certain geographical areas, it desisted from consist-

ently applying this principle to Germany and China for fear of incurring West German displeasure and because of its desire to pass off as progressive and friend of the Chinese revolution. A consistent policy would have been to recognise both East Germany and the Formosan Chinese.

It has taken the slippery road of compromise and surrender of our national territory, talking all the time about dignity and honour; it has refused to break off diplomatic relations with the aggressor who remains in occupation of our sacred soil, and finally it has proved itself to be devoid of self-respect by exchanging greetings with the Chinese Government on its National days and by actively supporting the aggressor's membership of the United Nations.

An amendment to the Congress manifesto reiterates the Congress Government's resolve to recover the territory occupied by Pakistan and China. But this declaration is hypocritical. A more glaring example of Congress duplicity cannot be found. When the Indian armed forces captured certain areas in occupied Kashmir last year, Kashmir, which day in and day out the Congress party proclaims, as an integral part of India, and when the late Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri had solemnly affirmed that India will never agree to withdraw from Uri Poonch, Hajipir, Kargil and Tithwal, even if India had "to stand alone in the world," how could the Congress Government agree to the Tashkent declaration and to the voluntary withdrawal of our forces from pieces of territory which we consider our own? Not only this, a small piece of territory in the Sialkot sector was handed over to Pakistan, although the border in this sector had clearly been demarcated on the ground and there could be no possibility of any dispute over the possession of this territory. It should also be noted that the figures published by the Survey of India and the figures supplied to the U.N. by the Government of India in regard to the total land area of this country reveal wide discrepancies. The figures bring out the continuing loss of our territory to foreign countries. The Congress government has miserably failed in carrying out its primary duty of defending the integrity of the state.

It has allowed India's relations with Pakistan to deteriorate, at the same time doing nothing to alleviate the sufferings of the minorities there. It has not made any serious, practicable con-

federal approaches to Pakistan whereby the futile game of reducing each other's foreign policies to ineffectiveness could be ended, defence efforts made complementary and the Kashmir tangle resolved within the framework of a wider unity.

The Congress Government's policy towards Pakistan has been characterised by a strange ambivalence. It has alternated between declarations of amity and readiness to sign pacts and treaties, hailing each such event as a charter of peace and the beginning of a new era in Indo-Pakistani relations and increased tension and denunciation of Pakistani intransigence. Invariably these limited and partial agreements have quickly been followed by renewal of tensions, firing across the border, charges of infiltration and a further deterioration in commercial relations and disruption of inter-State communications. The lesson of the violations of the Nehru-Liaquat, Nehru-Noon, Indus Water, Kutch and Tashkent agreements is very clear. There cannot be any piecemeal solution of the Indo-Pakistani problems. Either these relations are allowed to go from bad to worse, despite the declarations and agreements entered into from time to time, or a bold, new approach is made in resolving this conflict, with the avowed object of liquidating the evils of the partition settlement of 1947.

In Bhutan, Sikkim and other border areas, the Congress regime has obstructed the process of democratisation and has let the people groan under the weight of the old, oppressive social order.

Only on the basis of firm policy of democratisation and people's strength can the nation defend these areas from Chinese incursions.

The main weakness of India's foreign policy stems, however, from its stagnant economy and its continued scientific and industrial backwardness.

The SSP will bring about a fundamental shift in the country's policy and give it a firm base in rapid industrial and agricultural development. It will introduce by stages schemes of compulsory military training and conscription for certain age groups and achieve integration of the armed forces by abolishing caste units and caste kitchens etc.

It will not let the country's attention be diverted from the basic task of socio-economic transformation and formulation of

a firm policy in regard to China by the futile talk about manufacturing the bomb *now* or seeking the nuclear shield either of U.S.S.R. or U.S.A. or both.

It will try to bring the two super powers of the world together primarily to discuss, plan and organise a joint endeavour to end world poverty, and not only the problem of disarmament in isolation.

At the people's level the SSP will build friendly relations with all socialist parties, progressive groups and trade union organizations in Europe, and, especially, Africa, Latin America, and Asia, and also make gestures to Communist parties, excepting the Communist Party of China.

The SSP feels that doctrine of non-intervention must be restricted to Governments and man should learn to intervene in all affairs of his kind. The right to travel, work and try anywhere in the world should be recognized and citizenship should also not be a matter of cult and loyalty as of birth and residence.

Why Swatantra ?

by M. R. Masani

I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Please give a brief history of your party, what led to its formation as against the parties existing at that time? What is the raison d'être of the party?

The history of political parties in this country could well have been different if the wise counsel of Mahatma Gandhi had been heeded in 1947. The Indian National Congress was not really a political party but a broad national platform on which all shades of opinion had a place as long as they agreed on the one fundamental objective — the achievement of the country's independence.

With the coming of independence, the Indian National Congress had fulfilled its mission and the Mahatma urged that out of the Congress should be born two proper political parties, a socialist party led by Jawaharlal Nehru which should form the Government, and a conservative opposition under Sardar Patel. If the Mahatma's advice had been followed we would have established in India twenty years ago an ideal two party system of Government. Democracy would then have taken much stronger roots.

The absence of an effective opposition to the Congress Party was felt increasingly over the years and by 1959 it was clear that the Congress Party's policies had set the country on a course, what all controls locked, bound straight for disaster and ruin. It was to correct this situation that the Swatantra Party was formed in August 1959 and its *raison d'être* was its fundamental difference with the Congress Party over economic policy. In the name of planning the Congress Party had successfully concentrated in its own hands an enormous amount

of economic power. The State was considered all-important, and the individual was to be no more than a cog in the machine and an insignificant cog at that. There were also major differences over foreign policy. It will be recalled that in 1950 we had betrayed a small and peaceful neighbour in Tibet, and in the pursuit of our so-called "neutralism" we had condoned Chinese Communist Imperialism in South Korea through their satellites the North Koreans, and we had served notice on the Chinese Communists that we would not stand up and fight for our national interests.

In the answers to the succeeding questions an attempt will be made to show clearly where and why we differ from the disastrous policies of the Congress Party, and why we urge our fellow countrymen to support our policies and programmes.

II

INTERNATIONAL POLICY

Do you believe in a multi-party foreign policy?

A multi-party foreign policy has the advantage of stability and continuity irrespective of which particular political party is in office for the time being. In our country, however, far from there being too many changes of Government, we have the spectacle of one discredited Party continuing in office for more than 15 years. Stability and continuity have therefore come to mean an extreme rigidity of outlook and an unwillingness to adapt policies to the changing international situation. This is the tragedy. When changes and radical changes at that, are clearly called for on policy issues, they are being denied in the name of resisting "deviation".

What steps will you take to develop and strengthen an independent and flexible policy?

We would adopt the following steps:—

a) We would correct the pro-communist bias in our foreign policy. It will be recalled that when Tibet was attacked in 1950, we betrayed this small and peaceful neighbour by actively urging the United Nations to refrain from even discussing this question. When the Chinese Communists attacked Korea the same year and Indo-China in 1954, we were not able to see clearly who were the aggressors. Recently when the Communist Fifth Column in Indonesia attempted to take over that country by subversion and murder, we were strangely cool in

our response to those valiantly trying to save their motherland from totalitarian tyranny.

b) We do not seem to understand that to Communists international boundaries are not important and it is just one big war 'Communism Vs. Freedom' and all those who are not on their side are part of the opposition. We are, for this reason, unable to place the conflict in Vietnam in proper perspective. We have to realise that if South Vietnam were to be abandoned, Thailand would become very difficult to defend and with Burma already softened up, our whole eastern flank would be exposed to the Chinese Communists. The war in Vietnam is, therefore, a war for India's defence. But what has been and what is now our attitude. Our entire policy seems to be to keep demanding on an average of once a week that the Americans stop bombing North Vietnam forgetting that it is also necessary to urge the North Vietnamese to give up their attempt to take over the South by fraud and violence. Even the late Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri fell into the same error of urging restraint on one side only until it was brought home to him in Kashmir that the only way to deal with infiltrators from outside was to cross the borders and destroy the bases from which infiltrators operate.

We must give up the fear of what the Communists will say or do, realise where our national interests lie, and act boldly to defend those interests.

c) We are doing nothing to give a lead to the small free countries in our part of Asia. Our first objective must be the containment of Chinese Communist Imperialism. To do this we must rally the smaller free countries of our region in a mutual security arrangement with the cooperation of Japan and Australia. Recently Malayasia took the initiative in seeking an Association of South East Asia but we were not interested. We should respond to Malayasia's initiative and through the Association of South East Asia forge a mutual security arrangement for this region. We should try to further strengthen these political relations by working towards a common market of these countries. We must learn to accept the principle of interdependence, and if we choose our friends wisely we can do a

lot not only for ourselves but for the security and well being of other free countries in our part of the world.

Have you any proposals for normalising relations with China and Pakistan?

Over the next 25 or 50 years it must be true, as a historical proposition, that the Chinese Communist ardour for world revolution will tend to cool a little. The departure of Mao-Tse-Tung from the scene may throw up new forces which it is not possible to evaluate at the present time. Nevertheless as things stand, power is likely to pass to Marshal Lin Piao, Mao-Tse-Tung's "closest comrade-in-arms", and Marshal Lin's hard line of world revolution is likely to be a menace throughout the 1960s at least. Marshal Lin has spelt out Chinese Communist strategy very clearly in a major policy statement called "Long live the Victory of the People's war". In this 20,000 word statement published in September last year he describes in great detail the task of people's revolutionary wars. This task is the encirclement of cities from bases in the countryside. Marshal Lin puts it this way. "If North America and Western Europe can be called the cities of the world, then Asia, Africa and Latin America constitute the rural areas of the world. In the final analysis the whole course of world revolution hinges on the revolutionary struggles of the Asian, African and Latin American peoples". This then is the Chinese Communist aim of world revolution and their immediate objective is the establishment of "rural bases" i.e. the establishment of Communist puppet regimes in these countries. As we all know a tremendous campaign is going on in China today organized by the Red Guards to study the thought of Mao-Tse-Tung. One quotation from Mao-Tse-Tung which is very closely studied is the following clear warning "In defending China in war the Imperialist States have taken away many Chinese dependent States and a part of her territories.... England seized Burma, Bhutan, Nepal....". But we refuse to listen.

Against this total threat to our security and to the way of

life in which we believe the only correct policy must be vigilance and strength. This includes vigilance in respect of Communist China's puppets within our own borders. Outside the country a mutual security arrangement on the lines suggested in the previous paragraphs should be our policy. There is nothing wrong and no lack of a proper sense of self-respect in the countries of Asia coming together and collectively decide that they need further assistance if they are not to be overwhelmed by a ruthless and determined opponent.

A major obstacle to this policy is likely to be Pakistan. Pakistan is today flirting with Communist China out of bitterness towards us. We believe that this policy is against Pakistan's own national interests. But who taught them to disregard national interests in the pursuit of ill-advised policies? Who first used the slogan "Hindi Chini Bhai Bhai"? Who taught them to play off democratic friends against Communist foes? So we must show a little patience and understanding if Pakistan is today copying what we did so blatantly ourselves not so long ago. We must actively persuade Pakistan to realise where her and our interests lie and in the process make a frank admission of mistakes in our policy towards Communist China in the past, and correct those mistakes. It requires statesmanship on the part of the leadership of both countries to overcome our narrow interests and to concentrate on the far bigger issue which is nothing less than the question of survival of our two countries as independent nations. We believe that such an approach on our part will produce results and there need be no sacrifice of our vital interests. This then must remain a long term objective of our foreign policy notwithstanding the differences between our two countries today. A lot can be done to improve the climate of our relationship immediately on the following lines :-

- a) Trade between our two countries can be liberalised. Our economies are in many ways complimentary and both countries stand to gain by taking advantage of this situation.
- b) Irritating restrictions on travel between the two countries can be removed.

How do you propose to build up an independent defence structure?

An independent defence structure in the sense of complete self-sufficiency in defence equipment is an illusion and a dangerous one at that. In this age of fast developing technology where sophisticated defence equipment built today is obsolete tomorrow, to think of containing a determined and ruthless neighbour, on our own, is not only to betray a complete lack of awareness of the dangers but to exhibit an inferiority complex of the worst type. We have to recognize the principle of interdependence in defence and shape our policies accordingly. President Kennedy used to say that even the U.S.A. could not stand alone. If this is true of the most powerful country in the world, how much more is it true of a country placed as we are. If we would only shake off this feeling of inferiority we should be more ready to cooperate with like-minded countries to save Asia for the free way of life in which we believe.

What would be your approach to the (a) Commonwealth of Nations? (b) Afro-Asian solidarity? (c) The United Nations?

(a) Commonwealth of Nations :

The Commonwealth link is a positive good in the sense that any link which brings countries together in this distracted world is a positive good. We have not taken sufficient note, however, of the changing nature of the Commonwealth and failed to revise our expectations from this link. On the one hand, we have become a little too much involved in emotional issues which only cloud our judgement. There cannot be any support for the illegal regime in Rhodesia and for the indefensible prejudices of Mr. Smith and his friends but it is still true to say that at the last conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers, for instance, far too much time was spent on discussing this issue which could perhaps have been better utilised in meaningful discussion of our economic problems and the Communist

Chinese threat to Asia and the Asian members of the Commonwealth in particular matters far more vital to our well being.

On the other hand, the truth must be faced, that with Britain's entry into Europe, which is only a question of time, many things will change in the working of the Commonwealth. We are already late in planning and working for the day when the system of commonwealth preference, or what remains of this concept will come to an end. This is a sphere in which planning should have been done but has been neglected. We need imaginative Government policies to assist trade and industry to develop alternative markets for our exports now, not after Britain has gone into Europe. There will be occasion later to elaborate on the wrong-head policies adopted by the Government in an effort to increase our export trade.

(b) Afro-Asian Solidarity :

This is an overrated and overworked concept. The one common factor among the countries of Africa and Asia about 30 years ago was the struggle for self-government and independence everywhere. This Chapter is now closed except in small pockets in Africa. Nationalism is an important force for countries struggling to be free but the history of our times shows that in the post-independence era nationalism can become a retarding influence. Strong nationalism tends to make the countries concerned hesitant to cooperate with one another even this cooperation is dictated by their own national interests. What we are witnessing today is a pathetic attempt to preserve and apply the same heady wine of nationalism to what are cold and ruthlessly rational post-independence problems. Not recognising this, we left our country's vital interests to look after themselves and became pre-occupied with "anti-colonialism" and "socialism". We called three major conferences not to discuss the new imperialism practised by the Communists but to discuss colonialism which, in any case, was in full retreat by the first conference was held in March 1947. The later conferences including the one at Bandung in 1955 were called to indulge in harmless little debates "to promote goodwill and

cooperation", "to establish friendly mutual relations", "to take a special interest in Asian and African problems", and "to discuss social, economic and cultural issues". This hangover from the past must be overcome.

(c) *United Nations :*

The United Nations is still Man's best hope for peace. We should cooperate wholeheartedly in making the U.N. a more effective instrument for waging peace. The continued diversion of huge resources into armaments — and the recent Russian decision to raise the arms budget by 8% is an example — is a tragic waste. But we must be realistic. Everyone must deplore the loss of life and property in Vietnam but when our back-yard is in flames it makes no sense for us to keep calling parrot wise for universal total disarmament in the World Organisation. As long as effective machinery is not devised by the wisdom of man to enforce the Rule of Law throughout the world, it will be necessary to supplement the efforts of the United Nations by self-help on a regional basis if the free way of life is to survive.

Do you think that military preparedness is financially possible for us ? If not, what would be the solution ?

This depends on our assessment of the threat facing us. Until 1962, for example, it was an unshakable plank of the Government's policy to choose to ignore the evidence and firmly maintain that an attack by the Chinese Communists was simply not possible because after all Communist China was a "socialist" country! Mr. Krishna Menon, as Defence Minister, is reported to have opposed even a logistic study of the Indo-Tibetan border. If the analysis in this paper is correct and the threat from Communist China has to be contained, then we must first determine and evaluate the threat. China today has an army many times that of our own and it is developing nuclear weapons and the delivery systems to go with those weapons at a

very fast rate. In a poor country only a totalitarian dictatorship can enforce such a pace because it can afford to ignore the claims of its subjects for a better life. An attempt on our part to match the Chinese threat "Soldier for Soldier" and "Bomb for Bomb" can therefore be made only in one of two ways:—

- 1) By a similar ruthless dictatorship being imposed upon this country, something which we utterly reject.
- 2) By a massive diversion of our already scarce resources from economic development to the production of armaments. To appreciate the extent of diversion necessary, it is important to remember that simply to match the Chinese armed might is not enough. Particularly in the field of nuclear weapons, it is considered that an effective deterrent means achieving a superiority of about eight or nine to one. As for delivery systems again the advantage is with the Chinese Communists. Our major cities and industrial complexes are within a 500 mile range of their bases in Tibet whereas for us to reach similar targets in Communist China means penetrating upto 3000 miles into hostile territory. Therefore, the cost of delivery systems to us will be, if anything, more expensive. The choice is an agonising one and for any democratic government pledged to promote the welfare of its citizens, the only sensible answer lies in a two-fold policy :
 - a) We must do everything we can to equip our forces with all the conventional weapons that they need, not forgetting adequate clothing, training and increase in strength where necessary.
 - b) Building upon the mutual security arrangement referred to earlier, the free countries of Asia must jointly seek and obtain a clearly defined and well publicized nuclear umbrella. Some people maintain that a nuclear umbrella must be arranged very quietly and behind a veil of secrecy for fear of upsetting the Chinese Communists! Such an approach is wrong in principle and will not achieve the results intended. It can be no satisfaction to us that under the terms of the nuclear umbrella Chinese cities should be destroy-

ed in retaliation after we lose our cities. The object of deterrence is to avoid a strike being made against us. The people to convince, therefore, are the Chinese dictatorship who must be left in no doubt that any reckless adventure on their part will invite immediate and overwhelming retaliation. This can only be done if the nuclear umbrella is clearly defined and well publicized as we cannot afford to risk a misunderstanding with our enemies.

III

DOMESTIC POLICY : ECONOMIC

What are your plans for the regeneration of the economy to ensure more food, more employment, lower cost of living, better housing and more of the basic amenities of life for the vast majority of the people?

The question arises because the present method of planning which the Swatantra Party has always opposed, has denied the people their minimum requirements of food, housing and other necessities of life. Mr. Asoka Mehta has said publicly that the present generation of our citizens will be trampled upon in the process of economic development. We hold that this ideologically motivated planning imported from Soviet Russia has been responsible for this state of affairs. Its main features briefly are, comprehensive central control, direction, and administration of all aspects of the economy; concentration on heavy industries to the neglect of agriculture and consumer goods industries; emphasis on State ownership in industry; joint co-operative or collective farming; setting up of targets first without relation to available resources and then a search for resources; and denigration of incentives, the profit motive, private property and private enterprise. It has set 'austerity' and not 'prosperity' as its aim.

Our criticism of this method of planning is therefore directed against:

- 1) the objectives and priorities. The primary objective has been centralised power, political, social and economic, and in providing this power to the small group of rulers — the 'socialists' the 'New Class', our

planning has been a great success, but it has failed in everything else. The priorities have been first heavy industry, agriculture a poor second and consumer goods far behind.

- 2) The completely irresponsible manner of raising finance to meet the cost of gigantic plans. The only targets that have been exceeded have been the targets of taxation. It was estimated that the Second Plan would require additional taxation of Rs. 400 crores. The actual additional taxation raised was Rs. 1000 crores. In the Third Plan the estimate was Rs. 1000 crores, the actual additional taxation was Rs. 2260 crores. The lesson has still not been learnt. There is continuing folly over the Bokaro Steel Plant where our own consultants feel that a saving of Rs. 300 crores can be achieved, but we are afraid of upsetting the Russians. There is no element of cost consciousness in these public sector projects. But the nation has to bear the burden. The deficit financing generated over the last 10 years has caused a great deal of hardship to all sections of our people in the shape of a rapidly rising cost of living. The official general index of prices rose by 80% over the Second and Third Plan period and by as much as 30.6% over the last 2 years.
- 3) The callous and brazen misuse of public funds brought out in successive reports of the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament bear witness to an important consequence of this type of planning.
- 4) The political bias in economic development is beginning to play an increasing part in the decisions of the Planning Commission. There are all kinds of pressures from various States for locating projects in those States without regard to economic factors. This arises because the Congress Party has mixed up economics and politics to such an extent that every economic problem is exploited for political ends.

Therefore, we would adopt the following policy:

Our plans for ensuring adequate food are set out in more detail in answer to a latter question. Now what about more employment, better housing and lower cost of living, and how are we to assure to the vast majority of our people more of the basic amenities of life. Our approach to the question of economic development is first to reject this present method of planning which has been such a failure and to replace it by the liberal ideas of the indicative type of planning which has proved itself in France, in U.K. and now in Japan. This approach is based on the following basic principles:

- 1) The objectives of indicative planning are to increase the supply of goods and services desired by the people, not determined arbitrarily in a Planning Commission, and to see that there is equitable distribution of these goods and services.
- 2) Economic planning, we believe, ought not to be a matter for party politics at all. It should be free from all dogma and prejudice and should be left to technicians and other practical people. It should be a process of consultation, not a series of commands. As Jean Monnet has said, "planning should be a permanent exchange of ideas between the administration and the country in a concerted economy and not in a dirigiste economy of a bureaucratic or corporative nature".
- 3) The role of the individual as producer and consumer is central to such an approach to planning and must be safeguarded. Modern economists question and with good reason whether the most important scarce commodity in developing countries is capital. It is far more likely to be lack of individual enterprise and initiative. Excessive curbs and restrictions by the State sap and discourage such individual enterprise and initiative as exists and encourage dependence upon a paternalistic Government.
- 4) The function of the State is primarily to provide the "infra structure" or "social overheads" or "indivisibles" or whatever we may call the creation of preconditions for economic development. Today the Government

takes on so much in the economic sphere that the primary functions of the State tend to be ignored. For instance, one State Government proposes to bake bread and catch fish. This is not simply socialism; it is socialism gone mad.

- 5) The consumer must be free to decide what he will buy and at what price. It is the duty of the State to protect him against exploitation by monopolies and cartels and any surreptitious arrangements to defeat free competition. But it is no answer to control private monopolies simply to create bigger and more irresponsible monopolies in the hands of the State.

Let us now spell out these policies in more detail. First of all we would correct the priorities. Our priorities will be (1) Agriculture (2) Consumer goods industries and (3) Heavy industries, in that order. The emphasis on agriculture and consumer goods industries coupled with encouragement to the entrepreneur will help the growth of the economy and thereby generate more employment. The cost of living is high today because too few goods are being chased by too much money. We will restrict public expenditure on the one hand and encourage more production of the goods required by the people in a free competitive economy.

With devaluation our already heavy burden of foreign liabilities has increased a great deal. How do you propose to reduce this burden without slowing down the rate of growth of the economy?

The first thing to do is not to increase this burden of foreign liabilities any further. This is not as obvious as it sounds because if the wretched Fourth Plan which has been published in outline is going to be carried through then one absolutely certain consequence will be a substantial increase in the burden of foreign indebtedness with little corresponding advantage to the country. The rate of growth of the economy can not only

be prevented from slowing down but can be positively increased, by the following methods:

- a) There must be no more investment in the public sector.
- b) A cut of 10% must be enforced in all Central and State Government expenditure. This will save about Rs. 500 crores straightaway.
- c) There must be no more Government to Government loans. Foreign capital must be encouraged to come in at its own risk, that is to say as private investment. If private investment fails or if profits are low or uncertain or capital depreciates, the country is not prejudiced. In the case of Government to Government loans, the obligation to repay remains even though we may make poor use of these loans and waste them.
- d) The policies set out earlier will induce a great spurt in industrial activity throughout the country. It is only in such a climate that foreign capital will come in. It will not come in as long as honest Indian capital is ill treated. The opportunity of devaluation has been lost because the follow-through measures have not been taken. All the indications are that in the Fourth Plan all the follies of the past will be repeated with this major difference that the follies will be on the largest scale ever. The pre-occupation of the Planning Commission is still not with more production and with increasing the size of the cake so that each one's share will be larger. The pre-occupation is still with outdated dogma. The Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission and Minister of Planning Mr. Asoka Mehta is "India's most prolific fountain of left-wing verbosity" to quote a respected Calcutta journal. He is only worried about "how far we are moving towards socialism or how far away from it". If this prejudice and dogma which has made Mr. Asoka Mehta and his friends blind both to reason and to experience, is not given up, another devaluation in the next two years is inevitable.

What has been our rate of growth? It has been a poor 4% per an-

num and in some years it has been a good deal less. Other countries of Asia not burdened by this type of State monopoly and State capitalist planning have done much better. Next door neighbour Pakistan achieved a rate of 6.8%, Taiwan 14.9%, Israel 16.6% and Japan 16.8%. A study of the Economic and Scientific Research Foundation in February 1966 showed that with the sole exception of Indonesia our rate of growth has been the lowest in Asia. It is small satisfaction to be ahead of Indonesia. It will be recalled that the now discredited President Soekarno having first ruined the Indonesian economy by policies very similar to Mr. Asoka Mehta's, has offered the job of putting that country's economy on its feet to anyone bold enough to take it with the proviso that failure will be rewarded by the individual being shot! Fortunately President Soekarno has very little say now in the policies followed by his Government and Indonesia will recover in spite of President Soekarno. The problem we face is not, therefore, to prevent the slowing down of the rate of growth of our economy but to increase this rate rapidly. Under the stimulants advocated our economy should pick up fast and our rate of growth will then begin to match and even improve upon that of the other free countries of Asia.

What steps will you take to dovetail the development programmes of the public and private sectors to achieve a balanced growth and diversification of industries?

We visualise a clear demarcation in principle between the role of the State in economic development, and the role of citizens either as individuals or organised in groups or in public limited corporations. The function of the State, we maintain, is primarily to provide the infra structure on which private enterprise and initiative can erect the super structure. Briefly this includes development of a network of highways, railways, waterways, ports and air terminals; a first class postal, telegraphic, telephonic and overseas communications service; educational facilities designed to increase the social and technical

skill of individuals, a sound administrative set up with clear and simple rules and regulations which help and not hinder the objective economic development; and attention to basic though not spectacular requirements like afforestation and soil conservation measures.

The rest must be left to the initiative of the citizens in a free competitive economy. There will of course be exceptions. In times of crises or when citizens organised in even very large corporations are unable to take up particular tasks considered necessary in the national interest, the State must step in. Therefore, we suggest that a kind of balance must be struck and this balance must be on these clearly defined principles, with an awareness of the capabilities and the shortcoming of both State enterprise and private initiative. But to attempt to decide how much milk shall be produced in the private sector and how much in the public sector is an exercise in futility the net result of which often is that the consumer has to go without milk altogether!

We agree that diversification of industries is desirable to achieve balanced all round development of the country. But diversification cannot normally be imposed from above by orders of the Government or the Planning Commission. This would be placing too much trust in the "wisdom of the few" which even Mr. G. D. Birla complained of a few days ago. The same results can be achieved by appropriate fiscal measures and by positive incentives to locate the required industries in suitable areas. The considerations governing this diversification must be economic considerations only, not for example, in order to buttress the declining fortunes of the ruling Party in a particular State.

What measures do you propose to adopt for maximising agricultural production? What incentives will you offer the mass of the peasantry to introduce modern production techniques?

Increasing agricultural production is a subject that has been talked of at great length for many years. If words could pro-

duce food we would have a bumper crop every year. It was 15 years ago that Pandit Nehru made his famous "belt tightening" broadcast in which he announced the Government's intention to discontinue the import of foodgrains within a year. Since then we have had commissions and committees galore. Crash programmes and seminars on food were held almost every week, and the situation gets worse. Another difficulty is the misuse of resources. It is not as though the allocation for agriculture in the Five-Year Plans has been negligible; in the First Plan the allocation was Rs. 600 crores. It was increased to Rs. 950 crores in the Second Plan and Rs. 1,738 crores in the Third Plan. In the Fourth Plan, the figure is to be Rs. 2,390 crores. If all the money allocated had been used for the purpose intended the results would have been better than we are now. But if as Mr. Krishan Bhatia of the *Hindusthan Times* thinks "the principal purpose of such programmes has been to enlarge the political influence of the ruling party" then simply increased resources are not the answer.

The measures we would adopt to maximise the agricultural production are as follows:

- 1) Ceilings on land holdings are meaningless and unenforceable and they will be removed. They are inhibiting investment in the land. Our poor people do not ask whether their rice comes from a big or small producer; they simply want the rice. Now under the 17th Amendment of the Constitution if you had a farm of 200 acres and the ceiling applicable to you was 20 acres, the excess could be taken away from you and the compensation paid could not be questioned in any court of law. If anyone thinks that in these circumstances a farmer owning 200 acres of land would spend money to improve his holding and perhaps buy a tractor and other facilities to increase output, then that person needs to have his head examined. We would repeal the 17th Amendment of the Constitution and all the lawless laws protected by this Amendment in the various States will then fall to the ground.
- 2) Zonal restrictions have been held responsible by the

- FAO for aggravating the rice shortage. These restrictions will be abolished. Either we are one country or we are not; and these restrictions help nobody except the corrupt politician and his corrupt trading partner.
- 3) Compulsory levies and procurement are hated by the peasantry and they are at best an admission of defeat. They are based on ideological bias and will be abandoned. They have failed to produce results wherever they have been tried — in Maharashtra and in West Bengal, to give two examples.
 - 4) We will offer remunerative prices to the producer. There will be a guaranteed minimum price for everything that the farmer can produce and he can offer his grain at this minimum price at his option. He will not be forced to sell at cheap rates either to the wholesaler or to the local bureaucrat acting for the Food Corporation. It will be recalled that on this question of remunerative prices, Dr. Raj Krishna, a celebrated economist in this field, resigned from the Agriculture Prices Commission. Such a programme is not a new idea. It has produced wonderful results in other countries and there is no reason why it cannot be as successful here.
 - 5) Our farmers are being forced to pay what they cannot afford for irrigation water. We would consider all irrigation projects a fair charge on the State and no attempt will be made to recover these charges from our poor peasants.
 - 6) Mr. Asoka Mehta and the Congress Party want to increase land revenue. This seems to be a very poor way to help to increase food production. We would abolish land revenue except to the extent necessary to maintain land records.
 - 7) So far there has been only talk of providing the farmer with better seeds and fertiliser. We would encourage joint stock companies to set up seed farms and fertiliser factories. These farms would show the farmer, by deeds not by words, what modern techniques can

achieve. The rest is simply a question of providing the farmer with the technical equipment that he will then be willing and anxious to use and an assurance that he will be allowed to retain the fruits of his labour. The National Government in Ceylon of Mr. Dudley Senanayke has started this experiment and there is no reason why we should not follow a good example. By contrast the seed farm set up in Punjab by private enterprise which on the Government's own admission was providing the local farmers with good quality seeds at cheap rates, was closed down under pressure from the vociferous and irresponsible half-baked Marxist opinion in this country.

- 8) Finally until the position stabilises, it will be necessary to continue to provide subsidised rations to the poorer sections of our people.

How will you achieve a balance in the growth of industry and agriculture?

There is today a gross imbalance in favour of industry and against agriculture with the disastrous consequences that we are facing today. We shall correct that imbalance. We maintain that in India the primary occupation is agriculture and if we are to plan for the prosperity of our people it is common-sense that the farmer must be put on his feet first. It is ironic that a country where 80% of the people are engaged in agriculture operations, should be dependent for food on a country where only 6% of people are farmers. On the firm base of a prosperous agriculture must be raised an efficient and enterprising industrial complex. We are richly endowed with mineral and other resources and there is no reason why our industry should not be competitive in world markets given sensible Government policies. This is how France and Israel, to give two outstanding examples, have developed their economies. To reverse the logical priorities under illusions of grandeur and power is to build on shifting sands. Further, we do not mistrust

men and money as the Congress Party do. We are confident that our industrialists and businessmen can deliver the goods, but under the proper system of checks and balances to guard against abuse, inherent in a free competitive economy. We believe it is possible under such a system to achieve more in 5 years than what an ideologically misdirected Government has allowed in the past 20 years.

What inducement do you have in mind for the promotion of our export trade?

Following devaluation an attempt should have been made to categorise our industries into three divisions:

- 1) Industries which were in a competitive position before devaluation and which simply did not need the assistance of any lower prices. Here the situation should be corrected by appropriate duties, simple and effective in their operation. One example of how not to impose these duties is provided by the case of the Tea Export industry which is struggling valiantly with a most complicated slab system of export duty.
- 2) Industries where a 57% margin was just what was required to make our high cost products competitive in world markets. No further action was called for as regards this class.
- 3) Industries where the 57% margin provided by devaluation is still insufficient to meet world competition. Here all the complicated export incentives that still exist should be substituted by a simple and direct cash subsidy. One of the advantages of providing a straightforward cash subsidy is to keep track of the cost of such subsidies to the national exchequer.

Such a division could have been undertaken very easily by the Tariff Commission and everyone would have known where he stood. Instead we still continue to wallow in a mass of unnecessary regulations, cumbersome procedure, and unreal-

istic duties, which are changing so frequently that nobody is able to plan on a sufficiently long term basis.

The Government's answer to the need to promote our exports seems to be to concentrate on more and wider barter transactions with East European countries in particular, but it is not realised that these transactions operate against our interests. These East European countries are today importing machinery from England and other parts of Western Europe, stamping the machinery as having been made in these countries and selling them to us under 'rupee payment' agreements at prices upto 30% higher than what it would cost us to import them direct. These enormous rupee balances are then used to buy commodities like tea which are offered to our traditional buyers in the U.K. and other neighbouring countries at discounts ranging from 5% to 10%. In other words, the East European intermediary makes a cool profit of about 15% on these crude deals and further we are denied the foreign exchange that we would otherwise earn on the exports. These barter transactions are therefore against our national interests and they should be discontinued as soon as their existing terms expire, if not earlier. There is no objection to trading with East European countries but the trade should be in convertible world currencies like trade with other countries.

What are your plans for developing import substitution?

Import substitution is not an article of faith with us. We do not see that there is any point in going to great lengths to produce an article which other countries are more favourably placed to produce at a cheaper price. If we cut out all imports we shall only invite reprisals by other countries and the net result will be that our export trade will suffer. Import substitution is at best a slogan of weakness and defeat. We would much rather emphasize interdependence in trade and commerce as well as in defence and international affairs. We do not think any country can stand alone economically or politically nor is there any inherent virtue in isolation.

How will you mobilise the manpower resources of the country, train them and allocate them to different sectors of the economy to ensure their fullest and most effective utilisation for a rapid growth?

The biggest underutilisation of our man power resources is in the countryside. Our peasants are idle for many months in the year. The answer, however, is not steel plants and heavy industries in every village or every district. Heavy industries are capital intensive whereas our greater need is for labour intensive industries. An imaginative and practical scheme for encouraging handicrafts and village products can and must be evolved. This can be helped a great deal by genuine co-operatives. Political interference designed to control such organizations in the interests of the ruling party, help neither democracy nor the villagers. Marketing facilities must keep in step with production and with growing industrial activity and the spread of medium and small-scale industries the market for village produce will grow. Food processing and canning industries are an example of the kind of activity that needs emphasis in rural areas.

Industries will have to train their man-power themselves. Centralised training and command allocation of labour from area to area and industry to industry is repugnant to our principles and is more suited to a totalitarian form of government. We believe that labour should be free to command a proper price for its skill and experience in the market.

What will be your approach to nationalisation in general and as applied to Oil Companies, Gold Mines, Iron & Steel Industry and Road Transport?

Our approach to nationalisation is governed by practical necessity and not by dogma and ideology. Generally speaking, we do not favour nationalisation on the ground that it creates a monopoly in the hands of the State. We are against all monopolies whether operated by the State or by private enterprise

because monopolies tend to act against the interests of the consumer. There must obviously be some State monopolies like Post & Telegraphs, Public Water Supply, sewage and other social facilities. There can be no absolute and rigid division valid for all times and in all situations. What we constantly seek to ensure is that the interests of the consumer remain paramount. Therefore we see no need to nationalise the oil industry. Gold Mines are already nationalised. If private skill and initiative can improve the extraction in a manner in which the mines are not able to do today, then we would consider denationalisation. There is no reason why the Iron & Steel industry should be a State monopoly. Hindusthan Steel works far less efficiently than the privately owned plants. We would break up Hindusthan Steel into autonomous corporations, one corporation in charge of one plant, and if this mild dose of competition did not improve matters, we would consider handing over control of these plants to public limited companies.

In principle, we oppose nationalisation of road transport. We believe there is room for more entrants into this industry if only the State would carry out its proper function of opening up new roads and improving communications.

There seems to be a direct obverse relationship between the popularity of a government and the taxation it imposes. How do you propose to adopt a positive approach without hurting the people ?

We do not think people mind paying taxes, what they strongly object to is what happens to the taxes after they are collected. When they see their contributions used to maintain in Moghul splendour politicians who if not in office, would be part of the uneducated unemployed in the country, then they quite rightly complain. Again, when they see public funds to which they have contributed being invested in wasteful projects that do not yield good returns, then also they demand an explanation.

There is, in absolute terms, a crushing burden of taxes on the people, which can and must be reduced. But the more

important question is;— Is public money used with a full sense of responsibility for public good easily recognised or is it largely wasted? We think the answer to this question conditions the response of the people.

In spite of the heavy taxation over the past few years, the gap between the rich and the poor seems to be widening. What would be your ideological approach to the problems arising out of this disparity? What steps would you take to bring about the changes desired by you?

The attempt to reduce the undeniable gap between the top and bottom layers of society by savage taxation on the top layer is a self-defeating exercise. It is useful to remember that in India today it is possible to pay more than 100% of one's current income as tax and this at not particularly stratospheric levels of income. Our greatest authority on this subject Mr. N. A. Palkhivala has made this point very well in his book "The Highest Taxed Nation". It does not seem to be realised that whether the pattern of society is 'socialistic' or 'communist' or any other, to demand more than 100% of one's income as tax is something that can never be enforced simply because it is against human nature. This and other savage measures have only bred widespread evasion and corrupt practices. Further the 1966 budget has shown very clearly that we have long since reached the stage of diminishing returns in our rates of taxes. Only higher incomes can now produce higher revenues and higher incomes can only result from more production, more employment and more prosperity. Even with all this savage taxation, the real problem remains and, if anything, is aggravated. The poor man has remained poor, or what is more correct, has become poorer. To leave the poor man where he is and to pauperise the hardworking, the ambitious and the successful can only appeal to the baser emotions in human nature. How does it help the poor man to know that someone better off than he is has been dragged down to his level by Govern-

ment action? We do not believe in class conflicts and stand for a better life for all. Therefore, our approach will be two-fold :

- a) To lift the floor, to make life worth living for those at the bottom of the ladder of society and in return we only ask for hard work.
- b) The realisation that in human society progress is helped along by the uncommon man, by the able, the hardworking, the dedicated, and we propose to encourage such people by positive incentives. Substantial relief in taxation will be offered in such a way that the resultant saving, although retained by the individual, is invested in more production, generating more employment, and is not wasted in current consumption.

IV

DOMESTIC POLICY : SOCIAL

What are your plans for educational reforms, to increase the percentage of literacy, make available opportunities for higher education to a greater section of the people, and to give education a more practical bias in keeping with the needs of a development-oriented economy?

It is no exaggeration to say that our educational system is verging on a complete breakdown. For the first time in history, Calcutta University had to close down as it found it impossible to function. Student indiscipline has sunk to new depths and standards of education are falling rapidly. There is deep frustration among students and teachers alike.

An important reason for this sad state of affairs is the general economic distress. This affects students who have to pay fees, and teachers whose paltry salaries are eroded by the same all-pervasive inflation brought about by the wrong-headed policies of the Congress Party. Then there is the blatant political interference in academic life. Vice-chancellorships of universities are regarded as sinecures for discarded politicians and most political parties, particularly the Congress, and the socialist and communist parties, distract the attention of students from their studies by enticing them to the streets for frankly political purposes.

The Swatantra Party is perhaps the only party that stoutly resists the temptation to exploit students for political ends. We believe that students should concentrate on their studies and leave active politics well alone. We stand for the removal of

all improper political influence from universities. Vice-chancellorships should be awarded on merit alone and the incumbent should be enthusiastic enough to carry out the reforms which are so badly needed. Uncertainty created by frequent changes in syllabus must stop. Teachers must be dedicated men and women, not agents of one or the other political party. Their salaries and status must be raised but this must be kept in step with a rise in the quality of teachers.

Our universities have become factories for the production of graduates and the technique of mass production appears to have been adopted with singular success! There must be a rapid and substantial progress in technological and scientific education. Our job training in industry must be expanded and improved. Above all, new agricultural universities must be brought into being and no enterprising farmer should be denied the knowledge of modern technology.

What steps will you take to integrate the tribal peoples into the mainstream of national life?

This is very often a euphemism for forcing our tribal people into the strait-jacket of what we call civilised life. Our tribals are simple, charming and happy people and we do not see why they should be forced to adopt strange ways and customs. All they need are facilities to help them develop themselves. They need work, a market for their produce, and help with housing and education. For the rest, they want understanding and acceptance of their distinctive culture. The difficulties that have arisen with our tribals stem from a patronising attitude adopted by narrow-minded and smug officials led by even more narrow-minded ministers. These politicians should know that their attitude towards the tribals is quite unjustified either by their own record or by their plans for the so-called 'integration' of the tribals. Our tribal people will be proud to consider themselves Indians when we can offer them something more than poverty, disease and ignorance to share with us.

What are your plans for making medical facilities easily available to the majority of the people?

We would like to see at least the elementary medical facilities made available to every citizen of this country. But so also we would like every Indian to go to bed with his stomach full and a roof over his head. We would like to see every Indian child go to school, to learn a trade or to enter a profession suited to his ability. We would like to see that no able-bodied Indian is denied work. We would like all these things and if you ask the other political parties they will all say the same. Surely the whole argument is over how these basic facilities can best be provided and how soon. Therefore, it is part of the same fundamental argument of rapid economic development and the best means of achieving it. We maintain that of all the alternatives open to us, we have chosen the slowest and the most painful process of economic development — the State monopoly, State capitalist method. We believe that this method encourages the citizen to wait for 'big brother' to provide and this is wrong. Our alternative is clear cut and well tried elsewhere in the world. We maintain that it is only on the strength of a prosperous and growing economy that such basic social needs as medical facilities can be provided. For any one to say that in our situation medical facilities can be provided at once to every citizen it to play a cruel joke on our people and would be the height of irresponsible behaviour. There can be no argument over what kind of facilities must be provided. That is obvious. So our answer would be to say that we would make our economy strong, build a firm base of a prosperous agriculture and raise on it an efficient industry and in the process we will provide our people whatever we can afford in the shape of medical and other social facilities. Further, it would be our constant endeavour to improve those facilities.

How do you propose to ensure speedy and easy availability of legal assistance and justice for the masses of the people?

To place this question of speedy justice and legal aid in pro-

per perspective, it is important to record that over the last fifteen years, there has been a progressive deterioration in the position of citizens seeking legal redress. The causes are,

- a) A tremendous increase in ill-drafted, ill-conceived and misdirected legislation.
 - b) The enactment of unenforceable laws like the various State legislations imposing ceilings on land holdings, the Gold Control Act and the like.
 - c) Disrespect for judicial pronouncements and undermining of the independence, integrity, and status of judges of High Courts and the Supreme Court on the part of the Executive. The outstanding example is the 15th Amendment of the Constitution which among other things:
 - 1) Implies that judges of the High Courts and the Supreme Court are in the habit of misrepresenting their ages;
 - 2) Implies that if these judges have been good boys and not difficult, obstructive and inconvenient on the High Court bench, then instead of being retired at the age of 62 years on a miserable pension of Rs. 800/- per month, they have the prospect of being taken on to the Supreme Court bench for a further period of 3 years;
- and 3) Empowers the Union Government to direct when High Court judges may have their vacations in case, like kindergarten school children, they take too many!

These are strange ways to increase the people's respect for the custodians of our Fundamental Rights. It should be mentioned in passing that whereas almost every other salary-earning citizen has obtained a large increase in his emoluments, thanks to the rapidly rising cost of living and the fall in the purchasing power of the rupee, judges of the High Court and Supreme Court have not had their salaries revised since the Constitution was brought into force in 1950. The excuse is that India is a poor country and can ill-afford higher salaries to judges!

The net result has been a tremendous increase in the number of cases before the court and it is worth recording that the

biggest single number is in respect of cases filed by the citizen against the State for violation of one or the other of his Fundamental Rights.

It is clear, therefore, in this context that to simply increase the number of courts and judges will not speed up the work and no amount of easy legal aid will help. There has to be, first of all a return to constitutional government.

What steps will you take to remove caste, communal and regional disparities to strengthen secular democracy?

This is largely a problem of education. We must start with the young. The things that unite our people must be stressed. They must feel that they belong to the country as a whole and not to a particular region, caste or creed. You may say that these are safe generalisations but if we look around us we see the results of regional, caste, and communal pulls in various directions. Unfortunately the political leadership in office far from giving a correct lead to the country is actively associated and takes the lead in this disruptive process.

At the same time it is true that economic discontent and distress make people more ready to listen to the voice of disruption and agitation. A contented population will not be so ready to take to violence on caste, communal or other excuses.

We stand firmly for a non-denominational democracy. But it must be practised faithfully, not simply preached from public platforms. We are absolutely clear that to emulate Pakistan in this respect is to deny everything that we stand for in this country. If we believe that Pakistan is less than fair to her minorities we shall only injure our own cause if we attempt to imitate Pakistan. Religion is a personal matter between the individual and his Creator and ought to have no bearing at all on matters of State policy.

What is your policy regarding the language question, prohibition and family planning?

We have always maintained that the State exists for the individual and not the other way round. We applaud Gandhiji's stand that, that Government is best which governs the least. We stand for minimum interference in the lives of citizens on the part of the State. It follows from this that we are opposed to a restrictive and autartic approach to the language question, and think this is a subject on which members of all political parties should have freedom of expression.

It follows from our general approach that we are opposed to the policy of prohibition by law. The evils of excessive drinking are undeniable but as long as human nature remains what it is, men are not so ready to accept interference by the State in their personal habits. We should remember the wise counsel of Ivor Thomas that "the men for whom statesmen have to legislate are neither angels nor beasts". It is the duty of statesmen "to construct a society which is suited to the average human being compounded as he is of good and evil ingredients; and he must leave the extremes in either direction to be provided for by special measures."

On these very valid grounds prohibition has been a failure wherever it has been tried. Apart from this, the economic effects are widespread corruption in the ranks of enforcement agencies, deterioration in the health of the people who are driven to positively harmful drugs, not to speak of the loss of revenue from excise duties and the high cost of attempting to enforce an unenforceable measure. We would have no objection at all to temperance societies and other social service institutions trying to educate the people about the evils of excessive drinking. A drunkard must be looked upon as a sick man, socially undesirable at worst, but he is not a criminal.

Attempts to tackle the problem of over-population run into complications and difficulties created by religious and social prejudices. While we agree that the problem is a particularly difficult one, we do think that enough has not been done and our approach would be to first remove existing legal barriers in the way of family planning and then proceed to provide the necessary facilities throughout the country.

What will be your policy regarding the medium of instruction at school, college and research levels?

The sad thing about our educational institutions is that they suffer from too much interference, by too many politicians, trying to introduce too many changes, too often. One would have thought that the important thing is the quality and quantum of knowledge that is imparted. But this is tending to be overlooked. The question of medium of instruction is tied up with the question of education which has been dealt with earlier, and our view is that freedom should be allowed to members of all political parties.

Do you think that the development of Indian languages is possible only with 'Angreji Hatao' attitude? Or is it possible to accept English as one of Indian languages?

As explained earlier this is a question on which we feel members of all political parties should have freedom of expression.

V

DOMESTIC POLICY — POLITICAL

What are your proposals for strengthening democracy at the village level, and for a more active and intelligent participation of the vast majority of the people in the democratic process?

The Congress Party have laid great stress on Panchayati Raj, Block Development, and so forth, the ostensible object of which is to strengthen democracy at the village level. The real question that arises is this: Why in spite of all the money spent on these fancy projects and schemes does democracy still need a great deal of strengthening? The answer lies in the fact that the ruling party has used these institutions and facilities quite unashamedly to strengthen, not democracy, but its own political hold on the countryside. The villager has got the message quite clearly that he can obtain every assistance he requires for his needs provided he accepts without question the directions given to him by the local political bosses, the village headman, the chairman of the local co-operative, and so on. Equally, he is penalized if he is bold enough to attempt to stick to his rights. It is for this reason, for instance, that all political parties, other than the Congress, are united in their demand that the jeeps attached to Block Development Offices should be immobilized during the election campaign. This is one of the many abuses of the democratic process in our villages.

We do not say that any other political party in command of these vast opportunities of patronage would resist the temptations better because any such claims would be false. The only sensible answer is, therefore, to reduce the opportunities for corruption and misuse of public facilities. These insti-

tutions must not be imposed from above; they must grow and evolve. Such growth and evolution may be slow, but we should be building on firmer foundations. Assistance towards the growth of these institutions will be necessary and must be provided, but this is very different from the instruments of the ruling party which have been created throughout the countryside at public expense, but without the corresponding public good.

The other part of the question of more active and intelligent participation of the vast majority of our people in the democratic process depends on two further factors. One is better education. We do not subscribe to the view that our simple and largely illiterate villager is unworthy of exercising the right to vote. Our peasants are as shrewd and intelligent as peasants elsewhere in the world. The point is this. Because of the lack of the ability to read and write it becomes very difficult for political parties to reach the villager when they do not have the benefit of the vast chain of political patronage the ruling party has created for itself. Literature and the written word is of limited use, and other facilities of mass communication, like the radio where available in the countryside, is a State monopoly and quite improperly under the influence of the ruling party. There is, therefore, not that rapport that there should be between leaders of other political parties and the vast mass of our people. This is a shortcoming in the democratic process which must be made up.

What are your plans for ensuring an efficient and clean administration?

When we became independent in 1947 we inherited an efficient and clean administration as good as any in the world. It was one of our most important assets; but what has happened in the last twenty years? Why is there such cynicism in the country? Why has corruption entered into the very vitals of our public institutions? We would say that the reason is two-fold. The first reason is the example set by the present political leadership which appears to have embarked on a systematic

course of self-aggrandizement to make up, one supposes, for the 'sacrifices' made during the freedom struggle! We should remember that bad examples are easier to follow than good ones.

The second and far more important reason is the formidable system of controls and restrictions of every kind that has been built up in the country based on ideological prejudice against individual enterprise and initiative. The issue of new capital for companies requires Government approval. Shareholders cannot appoint directors to the boards of companies and fix their salaries and remuneration without the approval of Government. How much land the farmer shall hold is fixed quite arbitrarily and varies from State to State for the same kind of land. What price the farmer can obtain for his produce is officially determined and he cannot even decide how much he requires for his own consumption. In industry, what shall be produced and at what price is laid down in complicated and irrational licensing procedures. It is not possible to manufacture more ceiling fans and less motor cars without Government approval in one form or other. Any administration anywhere in the world will become corrupt if it is called upon to administer the wide ranging system of licences and controls that has been built up in this country.

The Swatantra Party claims no inherent moral superiority in this respect. Being realistic we believe that the only way to reduce the intolerably high level of corruption in the administration is to reduce the opportunities for corruption. If I do not require a permit to buy a ton of cement, then I do not need to bribe the clerk to process my application and perhaps bribe the official to approve it. It is as simple as that. Whether it is cement or foodgrains or foreign exchange, the principle remains the same. A distribution system with nothing to distribute cannot succeed. The only answer is to increase the supply of goods and services, and this must be done by positive incentives, not by exhortations from the air-conditioned offices of the Planning Commission. It has been said that "incentives are the prizes in the game of life — the goals individuals seek — the carrots; through the ages of Tutankhamen,

Alexander, Caesar, Louis XIV, and the Atom they have remained the same".

Therefore, the remedy must be clear :—

First, the country must be rid of the vast army of parasites in the shape of Ministers, Ministers of State, Deputy Ministers, and the like, whose administrative incompetence and ignorance are matched only by their greed; and to vote into office those of proved capacity and integrity to set the tone and the pace for the administration.

The second remedy which must go hand in hand with the first, is to dismantle the chains which today handicap and restrict our farmers and our industrialists and businessmen. Our producers both in the farm and in industry must be set free to operate in a competitive economy, not in a sheltered market. Only a free competitive economy has the built in system of checks and balances to ensure that the consumer—and each one of our 500 million people is a consumer—is not exploited and held to ransom. The producer must be forced to study the mood of the consumer, not the whim of the politician in office; his success or failure must be determined by his efficiency in providing the consumer with a good product at a competitive price, not by the degree of influence he wields in Government circles or with 'socialist' Chengis Khans in charge of Congress Party machines in the various States.

What are your plans for encouraging the full flowering of our varied regional cultures?

We do not believe that it is the function of political parties to have detailed plans for cultural activities. Culture is not a hothouse plant that can grow under controlled conditions.

We shall ensure a rapid economic recovery in this country. The threat of famine shall be banished from this land. No one must be denied the education that his talents require. Work must be found for our idle population. We believe that these plans for a better economic life for all will provide the basis for the full flowering of our varied cultures. No attempt must

be made to regiment our various cultures. Our tribals, for instance, must be free to develop according to their own genius. There ought to be no political interference at all in cultural activities.

Have you any plan to create a national consensus, within the framework of a multi-party democracy, for the all-round development of our country?

No. We do not believe this is possible or desirable. Our approach and attitude to the problem of all round development of our country is fundamentally different from the approach of the Congress Party and other socialist and communist parties. We believe that if our policies and programmes, which have been tried and have proved successful elsewhere in the world, are implemented in full, it will be possible to usher in a state of happiness and prosperity and a better life for all our citizens. We reject utterly the Asoka Mehta attitude of planning for austerity. How then can there be a national consensus? This can only be achieved by watering down the policies of the Swatantra Party and we do not think this is something that the country can afford. This does not mean that we are rigid and inflexible in our attitudes. We have shown that above all we are a party pledged to rational and practical policies. We shall co-operate to the maximum extent possible with like-minded parties. The point is, however, that a national consensus is quite impossible. This craze for consensus demonstrates the herd mentality. There is a marked reluctance in our country to stand up for principles and clear-cut policies. The Congress Party, which means all things to all men, provides a classic example of consensus gone mad.

We believe that there has to be a better polarisation of political parties, not based on personalities but based on principles and programmes. We believe that the voter must be given a free choice between clear-cut and well defined policies and programmes, and he must be able to change the party in power from time to time. Attempts to achieve a national con-

sensus are wrong because they tend to cloud the issues, and in the inevitable confusion there is no agreement and no commitment to carry out certain well defined policies and programmes. Therefore, the voter is denied the opportunity to get the best out of his Government. We maintain that in politics, as in economics, the choice of the individual citizen and the individual voter must not be restricted. We object to the voter being faced with a so-called 'national consensus' instead of being given a free choice between well defined alternatives, just as we object to the individual as consumer being denied a free choice of what he will buy and at what price, all in the name of planning.

Do you propose to initiate any changes in the constitutional structure?

We believe that the Constitution of our country as framed and adopted in 1950 is a Constitution that can be worked satisfactorily given a Government dedicated to constitutional procedures. If we are returned to power, it will be our endeavour to restore the Constitution as originally adopted and to remove the blots that have been inflicted upon it by the Congress Party in the name of socialism.

Again being practical people, we take note of the working of the Constitution and as far as the constitutional structure is concerned there is one particular lesson that has to be drawn. This relates to the distortion of the popular will in our legislatures. It arises because of the large number of candidates contesting a particular seat and the result often is that the winning candidate gets not more than twenty to thirty per cent of the votes. The Congress Party has as a result obtained 72% of the seats in the last General Elections on less than 45% of the votes. This distortion should be corrected and we would examine this problem and perhaps the answer is to introduce some system of proportionate representation.

What would be your approach to conditions in States where no party may have absolute majority?

Our general approach is quite clear. We stand for a 'double rejection' of the Congress and the Communists. Therefore, we will sit down and do business with the other non-Congress and non-Communist political parties and attempt to form coalition governments on the basis of a minimum agreed programme. We believe that this is what the electorate expects of us. The Congress cry of coalition governments being unstable and weak is malicious propaganda. There can be no worse type of coalition than the Congress Party itself because it has come to mean all things to all men with the inevitable deceit and opportunism that such an attitude implies. If the coalition is not simply a marriage of convenience and is based on a concrete programme it has a better chance of producing results because the continuance of the coalition depends on those results. The classic example of this is West Germany which has had stable coalition governments continuously since the end of the war.

We believe that our attitude will encourage a more practical polarization of political parties and give the electorate a choice between well defined alternatives. The Indian National Congress that fought and won the country's independence is dead. The group of small and selfish men who control the Party today have long since exhausted the fund of goodwill that the national leaders of the independence struggle built up by their patriotism, by their ability, and by their sacrifice. This nation owes nothing to the singularly poor coterie of misguided and stubborn men who to misquote will learn nothing and forget nothing and who have dragged the country down to its present sad state. On the contrary, we owe it to ourselves to say before it is too late: 'It is time for a change!

VI

MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS

If your party becomes a ruling Party, how will you solve the food problem? Do you believe in the zonal system?

First, we do not believe in zonal restrictions. Now to solve the food problem, obviously agriculture has to be placed on its feet. Agriculture is India's destitute industry. It is the Cinderella of Governmental policy. It has been starved of capital and it has been grossly neglected. In our Second and Third Five Year Plans, crores of rupees that should have gone to develop irrigation, to build tube wells, to produce fertilizers, to give the peasants modern tools, to encourage methods—the Japanese method or whatever you call it — of rice cultivation, have been swallowed by great White Elephants like Durgapur, Rourkela, Bhilai and other big factories. These big projects have done nothing. They have made big losses for the Indian tax-payers and Indian people. This is known as Stalinist planning. In Russia it has created a backward agriculture which has not enabled them to meet the food needs of the Russian people. Just as in China, the Communes have resulted in starvation and shortage of food grains, so also in India this kind of Stalinist planning has resulted in food shortage. What we would do is to put agriculture first. That would mean that instead of 21.8% of the total resources of the Fourth Five Year Plan being devoted to it, we would probably say that about 50% of the entire outlay of Government expenditure should be put in the land. This would mean encouraging the farmer instead of discouraging him as he is discouraged today.

* Extracts from *Swatantra Souvenir* 1966

Today, the farmer is persecuted. He is not allowed to get a fair price for his product, but he is expected to go into market and pay very high prices for kerosene, cloth, corrugated sheets or whatever else he has to buy. If he does not conform to this, if he does not hand over to the Government whatever the compulsory levy requires, then he is treated like a criminal. Recently they introduced in Parliament the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, which gives the Government more powers than they had taken under the Defence of India Rules which have now lapsed for economic purposes. One of the clauses of the bill says that if the farmer is found to be contravening the compulsory levy or a ban on the movement of foodgrains, then the entire materials which he was transporting would be confiscated, the vehicle in which the foodgrains or edible oil or ground-nuts were being transported would be confiscated, even though no charge was preferred against him. This could be done by the administrative decision of the District Magistrate. In other words, the peasant is reduced to the position of a potential criminal.

We think that the peasant should not be without honour in our country. He should be the foundation of our entire economic structure and any question of industrialising India has no meaning if its main industry, India's basic industry is agriculture, is not put on its feet. So, we would invest money in the land, we would give the farmer cheap credit, we would give him a floor price, and we would allow him to take what he gets in the market so that the production of food can increase.

But here one problem would occur to you. Since you are staying in a city you will say: "What about those consumers in the city who cannot afford to pay those high prices? We are not oblivious of this angle. Our answer is that the city poor and the village poor must be given food and edible oil at subsidised prices. For the sake of 10% of the people, 90% should not be penalised. Today what is happening is that in the name of the consumers a large majority of the Indian people who are agriculturists are being kept at destitution level.

Similar is the problem of ceilings. Ceilings have been so

fixed by the Planning Commission that no peasant's family, no farmers's family, can hope to make more than three hundred rupees a month. That is the official figure that a man should be allowed to keep as much land as will give him and his family of five, three hundred rupees a month or Rs. 3,600|- a year. When the Government of Andhra tried to raise this ceiling to Rs. 420|- a month or Rs. 5,400|- a year, the Planning Commission fought the Government of Andhra for one year saying they would not allow any farmer to retain more than three hundred Rupees a month for a family of five. What does it mean? It means creating a new class of Harijans in our country, hewers of wood and drawers of water who may never aspire to live, never aspire to sleep on a bed, eat at a table, send their sons to colleges or their girls to schools, have a radio set, have a television set. None of these things must be given to them. They must be kept like *coolies* for the benefit of the new Ruling Class in Delhi. So, my answer is that all persecution of the peasant must stop. He must be given the central place and until he is on his feet, wasteful expenditure in heavy industry must be suspended. If all these things are done, we do not believe that we would require more than two or three years to make India self-sufficient in meeting its food needs.

Don't you think the free enterprise policy propounded by your party will encourage economic exploitation instead of eliminating it?

Well, this is a very good question because I think this kind of doubt is entertained by many people. Now, what you call "free enterprise policy", we call competitive free enterprise, with the emphasis on competition. Competitive free enterprise means that anyone should be free to produce what he wants to; to sink his capital in it and to take his chance of making a profit or loss. Now, how can he do that? He does it by trying to assess the condition of a particular commodity in the market. We call it "Market Research". There is an institution in Delhi called the Market Research

Corporation of India which advises businessmen as to what the market in a particular commodity is likely to be in the next five, ten or fifteen years. But there is a lot of market research that goes on without going to the Market Research Corporation of India. Every firm has its own cell with staff known as "Marketing Department", which is certainly in touch with the consumers. The work of the Marketing Department is to find out what the consumers want, why the stocks are not sold in the market, why one particular thing is more popular than another, what are the remedial measures for it, and so on. All these are the everyday problems of enterprise. Competitive free enterprise does not exploit the people. It gives them the maximum service at the minimum price. Competitive free enterprise is economic democracy. It takes the process of the ballot box for Parliamentary elections, which comes once in five years, to the bazars and the markets of our country. In competitive free enterprise, the consumer goes every day to the market. Sometimes he goes five or six times a day to the market, sometimes his wife goes to the market for shopping. They exercise a choice every time they buy an article.

Now, how is this choice exercised? When a consumer goes with Rs. 10/- or Rs. 5/- or 50 paise in his pocket — he goes to vote in the bazar. He casts his vote on a particular commodity and not on another commodity just as he votes for the Swatantra Party or for the Congress Party. When he buys a particular commodity as against another commodity, he casts a vote. He may also cast a negative vote. He may come back without buying anything, like many ladies who go shopping—they just look at things, ask a number of questions to the salesman and come back without spending any money. That is a good thing. We should all encourage it. In that case, the lady casts a negative vote. She is not tempted enough to spend her money on any particular commodity. So, she comes back with her vote in her pocket. That is negative vote.

Now, it is this consumer's preference exercised by men, women and even children—pencil, ball, pen, sweets, cosmetics, etc.—it is this consumer's preference exercised in a free society that adds up to the pattern of production in the country. It is

just like going to a race where the tickets are bought on various horses. Then, they are totalled up by the Tote. Then, you will see the figures on the board that so many people have backed some favourite, so many people have backed this or that horse. Now the Tote totals up mechanically the preference of the race goers in regard to the horses which are going to run. In the same way, all of us go to the market and put our money on a particular horse or on a particular commodity. This is how economic democracy works and the biggest capitalist has to respond to the urges of the consumer. Anyone who wants to make a profit has to respond to the wishes of the consumers just as Parliament and Government have to respond to the wishes of the electorate. The difference is this. In an election you have to cast a vote once every five years and in the bazar your democracy works every day and at every hour. It is for this that the Swatantra Party stands for.

The alternative is the Command Economy exercised through a Planning Commission in Moscow or Delhi, where ten or fifteen people assert to themselves the right to become God, Almighty God, and to decide what is good for us, whether we like it or not, and to say that such and such a thing should be produced, but such and such a thing should not be produced. This is an alternative system of totalitarian dictatorship. That is why the Swatantra Party takes a very clear stand that we believe in competitive free enterprise. We are against monopoly, whether it is private monopoly or State monopoly.

Free Enterprise appears to be very attractive in theory but our experience is that with a very few notable exceptions, our businessmen and capitalists take every opportunity to exploit the consumers. How will you control their anti-social activities and safeguard the interests of the consumers when you come to power?

My answer is that those who are today exploiting the consumers are doing so as part of the Congress economic policy. They are given a kind of shelter — a private monopoly. So

long as they play ball, they are allowed to share the loot. I have said earlier the answer to monopoly is competition, not regulation. The answer to monopoly is anti-trust-laws, dispersal of monopoly conditions, and throwing the field open to competition. Today that class of Indian business to which you refer is an exploiting class and is thriving on Licence Permit Raj. They are part of the "New Class" of corrupt politicians, corrupt officials and corrupt businessmen. They are no friends of ours. We would like to put an end to their behaviour.

What I am saying is it is precisely enlightened Free Enterprise which we want to strengthen. It is precisely these black-marketeers, monopolists, licence-wallahs we want to destroy. When I say, destroy, I don't mean destroy them in any physical way, but only to take away their monopoly. Let them face competition or get out of the market, but we shall not do it so long as we talk of socialism and controls. It can only be done by Competitive Free Enterprise. We shall be happy to join in bringing in an Anti-Monopoly Law applying both to State enterprise and private enterprise in this country by which any attempt to corner a market should be stopped, as they do in Germany and America. So, we are anti-monopolists. We are competition-wallahs. I will go on to say that the only way to stop the exploitation of the consumer is by having free enterprise and competition throughout the field of economic production.

What guarantee is there, given the opportunity to be in Office, the Swatantra Party would be any better than the Congress Party?

While we would like to think that our people would behave better, given the opportunity, than the Congress people have done, I think it would be wrong to assume any **righteous** superiority on the moral level. After all, we are from the same soil, the same nation and the same family, and it is quite likely that the ills that have affected the Congress Party will affect any other Party similarly situated. To that, we have an answer

and that is this. We believe that the bulk of the corruption today stems from the regime of controls, licences and permits which goes by the name of socialism in this country. We stand for the complete dismantling of the entire apparatus of licences, permits, quotas and all patronage that is put in the hands of the politicians. We want to give economic power back to the people. Once economic power is handed back to the people, even if the Swatantra politician is liable to be corrupted there will be very little to be corrupt about. When we go back to a free and competitive economy, corruption can be kept down at a very low level. Today, the bulk of corruption in India comes from the distorted kind of socialism that is being practiced. Therefore we will disband it, and put it beyond the reach of our own people to emulate the exploits of the Congress people. This is the fundamental answer that we have to the problem that has been posed.

Why Communists (Marxist) ?
Election Manifesto

COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (MARXIST)

Election Manifesto

The fourth general elections are approaching in the background of the most unprecedented wave of mass struggles since independence. The crisis created by the anti-national, anti-popular bourgeois-landlord policies of the Congress Government has unleashed a wave of angry mass protests against starvation and suffering.

The mighty Bengal bandhs (lockouts), the Kerala, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh bandhs have set the pace for the new movement. Millions have participated in these struggles and braved the firing squads of the police to defend their livelihood and liberties. These have been followed by the mighty wave of student struggles which the Government seeks to put down by sheer terror. There have been big struggles of the working class, salaried employees and, finally, the employees of the Government. And, in November, the struggle spread to Andhra Pradesh where once more people were shot down and lathi-charged (Police Stick) because they raised the demand for the industrial advance of their state.

Never before since independence has India witnessed such mighty struggles. Never before since independence has India witnessed such brutal unleashing of police terror on a defenceless people.

The people are called upon to exercise their franchise in the midst of lathi-charges and raining bullets, growing hunger and starvation, mass jailing and detentions.

Will they endorse the policies which impose outright starvation on millions, which destroy the fundamental liberties of the common man and declare the policeman's baton to be the supreme law—that is the question.

Petty Achievements

In the midst of the growing breakdown of our economy and

the rising misery of our people, the Congress Party extols its own petty achievements as big triumphs of national reconstruction. Bhilai, Durgapur, Rourkela, Bhakra Nangal—these are paraded before a famished people. The petty rise in production and national income—almost at the lowest rate in the world—is upheld as a great advance before a people who do not get a square meal.

While glorifying their achievements the Congress leaders make desperate efforts to hide ugly truths.

A sizable portion of the huge plan expenditure is permitted to be looted by covetous contractors, corrupt officials and their Congress patrons.

The September session of Parliament uncovered one financial scandal after another revealing the Congress administration to be a cesspool of corruption.

They revealed how crores of rupees of people's money—money taken out of people's toil and sweat, money taken in the name of national defence and planning—was allowed to be plundered by common rogues acting in unison with corrupt officials and their ministerial patrons. They showed that the Congress Party could not be trusted with an honest disbursement of people's funds and give a clean honest administration to our people.

The lion's share in the newly-produced national wealth is allowed to be garnered by a handful of speculators, hoarders, profiteers, big capitalists and landlords.

Instead of eliminating British capital and liberating our economy from its fetters, the Congress rulers have imposed on us additional exploitation by the U.S. imperialists.

In the name of the national plans the Congress rulers have incurred huge foreign loans, now amounting to Rs. 4,000 crores, and reduced our nation to utter dependence on the USA for food, for external help for the Plan, for equipment for the armed forces.

At the end of twenty years of Congress rule, the country witnesses the grim spectacle of widespread famine, unemployment and starvation, soaring prices, and mounting discontent and unrest.

These are the real achievements of the Congress party which it dares not own before the people.

Not a day, therefore, passes without either a protest demon-

stration, strike, hartal or bandh to ventilate grievances and demand their redressal.

Not a day passes without the Congress Government resorting to mass arrests, lathi-charges, police firings and curfew orders, mass detentions under the Defence of India Rules and the Preventive Detention Act.

The last five years of Congress rule—the five years of the Third Plan—which were supposed to set the country on the road to self-reliance—have been especially oppressive, driving people of one state after another, driving all sections of the population, to miniature revolts.

Failure of the Third Plan

The utter bankruptcy of the Congress Party and its policies is seen in the fact that even the modest targets of the Third Plan could not be realised, notwithstanding an expenditure of more than Rs. 10,000 crores.

The achievements in basic industries, in steel, in machinery-making, cement, in all vital industries are nowhere near the declared targets. They only betoken the ghastly failure of the Congress planners. Coal, cement, fertilizers, jute machinery, paper and sugar machinery, mining machinery—production of all these is far below the target.

And, above all, the Congress planners have dismally failed in reaching the minimum target of 100 million tons for food-grains production. The highest they could reach was 88 million tons in 1964-65, to be followed by 72 million tons in 1965-66.

The result has been a general shortage of every commodity, every necessity of life, imposing hardships and restrictions on the mass of people. The Plan was to ensure a minimum per capita availability of 17.5 ounces of foodgrains in 1965-66, as compared to 16 ounces in 1960-61. All that it could achieve was to reduce per capita availability to 15.4 ounces per day in the most productive year 1964-65; in 1965-66 the per capita availability was only 12.4 ounces.

In a country where three-fourths of the people are scantily clad, the Congress planners could not improve the per capita availability of cloth during the last five years. It more or less remained constant at the 1960-61 level of 16 yards per capita.

The declared Third Plan target of 17.2 yards could not be reached. Production of mill-made cloth instead of increasing was below the 1960-61 level in 1965-66.

If the Congress leaders had been deliberately planning for scarcity, for food famine and depriving the people of cloth and necessities of life, they could not have succeeded better.

Colossal Taxation

What are the other achievements of the plan? Unemployment which was seven million by the end of the Second Plan, has risen to nearly ten million by the end of the Third Plan according to official statistics which understate the real state of affairs.

Denying the people the basic necessities of life the Congress planners have inflicted colossal taxation and excruciatingly high prices on the common man in the name of national planning and defence.

Never under any previous regime was the ordinary citizen taxed so much as under the benign rule of the Congress. The Congress has surpassed the unenviable record of all previous rulers including the British who openly looted our people.

Under the Congress regime every necessity of life is heavily taxed. No article consumed by the common man escapes the marauding hands of the Congress tax-gatherer. Governmental taxation forms in many cases more than 30 per cent of the price of articles. The central Government is closely followed by the state governments who raise the land tax, irrigation levy and every other conceivable impost to defraud the peasant of his produce.

In the last five years alone the Congress planners have inflicted a burden of Rs. 2,600 crores on the people. The Congress Government's taxes defy all known canons of taxation and justice and have degenerated into an open robbery of the people.

While the masses are ground down, the monopolists including the foreign capitalists are given concessions after concessions. Wealth and other taxes are reduced to a farce. Corporations and companies are given further concessions and facilities for profit-making. And evasion has been allowed to be system-

atised into a recognised practice enabling the top circles to defraud the treasury of hundreds of crores of rupees.

This is how the Congress Government is removing inequalities in wealth. This is the real face of its chatter about socialism and classless society.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) demands an end to this robbery. This colossal taxation of the common man is neither necessary for defence nor for economic development.

The masses are being fleeced only to finance the profiteering of the capitalists and the building of capitalism in the country. Burdens of this anti-people course must be squarely placed on the crowd of exploiters—landlords, capitalists and foreign monopolists. The CPI (Marxist) demands a drastic reduction of all taxes on the common man and complete abolition of all cesses, taxes and imposts on the necessities of life.

Prices

But high and unconscionable taxes are only one of the instruments of inflicting miseries on the people.

The other, equally devastating in its effect, has been the instrument of rising prices through which the Congress Government has been compelling the people to pay for the capitalist path—for building capitalism in the name of national planning.

During the period of the Third Five-Year Plan alone, prices have risen by more than 30 per cent according to official statistics—the rise in the last two years breaking all records. After devaluation prices of some commodities have risen by more than 50 per cent. This continuous and steep rise is defrauding all toilers, all workers—employees, peasants, agricultural workers—of the legitimate return for their labour, depreciating their wages, forcing down their standard of living, and inflicting starvation on tens of millions of our people.

People in all states, from all sections, from the school teachers and the Government employees to the working class and the agricultural labourer, have started fighting against the effects of taxation and high prices, and unprecedented mass struggles are sweeping the country.

The price-rise is not accidental. It has been manufactured deliberately by a continuous resort to deficit-financing which

amounted to Rs. 1,100 crores in the Third Plan. This method of financing the capitalist plan has for its object continuous penalisation of the masses so that the monopolists, the capitalists and the Government can gather sufficient capital in their hands.

No previous government, no previous regime had so thoroughly prostituted its political power to use the price mechanism to systematically defraud the masses.

To cheat the people, the Congress Party and its administration sometimes make a show of price-control measures which are meant to achieve nothing. Every nominal step of price control is accompanied by ten steps for raising prices.

With or without price-control measures, the speculators and black-marketeers continue to loot the people.

The Congress Party has no intention of changing these disastrous policies.

The Draft Fourth Five-Year Plan reveals further Congress intentions of fleecing the people in the name of price-control. Deficit-financing is to be given up; but that is no guarantee that prices will be reduced or prevented from rising; on the other hand, they will rise further. All that is guaranteed is that wages and salaries will not be allowed to rise, that there will be delinking of Dearness Allowance from the cost of living index.

Thus in the name of price-control there will be a general offensive against wages and salaries.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) denounces this policy and demands effective price-control and drastic price-reduction in the interests of the people. It demands immediate reduction of the prices of all necessities of life.

Such price-reduction is possible and can be easily ensured if banks are nationalised leading to control of credit, if profits of traders, businessmen and industrialists are controlled and State Taxation on essentials of life is abolished.

This is precisely what the bourgeois-landlord Government of the Congress Party refuses to do.

The price mechanism has been systematically used to defraud our peasantry in the interests of landlords, speculators and traders. Without a proper integration of the price mechanism, without fixing the prices of manufactured and other goods needed by the peasant masses, the attempts to fix foodgrain

prices hit the interests of the small peasant producer and only help the profiteers. Besides the purchase prices offered by the Government are generally unremunerative for the poor peasant.

In the conditions obtaining in India today, the mass of poor peasants is unable to secure the officially fixed prices at harvest season, as they have to part with their produce at lower prices—the benign Congress Government refusing to intervene to purchase when harvest prices fall below the ceiling prices. After the harvest food prices are raised once again. On the basis of this rise in prices, the prices of all the goods needed by the peasants also rise.

The peasant is forced to pay the inflationary prices for his requirements needed for production and for all the necessities of life—including food which he has to buy in the lean months.

This double method of exploitation leading to expropriation is one of the causes of the continuing food crisis which puts the entire country on starvation rations.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) demands a fair price for the small peasant producer—a price which will leave him sufficient incentive for production; it demands guaranteed supply to him of all his requirements at low cost—so that this unjust process of exploitation is stopped.

Procurement and Distribution

The utter cruelty and class-selfishness of the Congress Party's rule is seen in its total failure to organise equitable distribution of the food produced in the country.

Today millions are facing starvation. Mothers are selling their children for a few paise (100 paise = Re 1). Families driven to desperation are committing suicide. And there are starvation deaths by scores. Has it moved the cruel hearts of the Congress rulers, to see that there is an equitable distribution of food?

No, on the other hand, whenever the people demanded such measures, they tried to drown their voice in an orgy of blood and violence. The shooting down of food demonstrators in Bengal, the killing of students in Assam for the crime of demanding effective measures against black-markeeters, the wild massacre in Banda—these give an insight into the real nature of Congress policy.

At the same time the Congress rulers attempt to cheat the people by making a show of measures for effective distribution. They establish food zones, and abolish or change them according to their convenience i.e. the convenience of the whole-sale traders and black-marketeers of the region who back the Congress.

The central and state governments do not procure the surplus stocks of landlords and other surplus-holders, thus inflicting unnecessary starvation on the people directly under their control; nor do they help the people in extreme distress in other states unless black-market prices are secured for the hoarder of the grain.

The Central Government advertises the establishment of a food corporation, but at same time circumscribes its operations in the interest of the landlord-hoarder. And even this corporation is unable to function for want of cooperation from the Congress administration dominated by local landlord interests.

The Congress does not take any genuine step to nationalise the foodgrains trade.

The tall talk of compulsory grain procurement, state-trading in foodgrains, zonal system, price-fixation, cheap grainshops—all these have been proved to be a pure and simple hoax.

How can one expect the Congress to procure forcibly from the landlords, hoarders and grain speculators when these are the very people on whom the Congress depends for its election funds and votes to perpetuate bourgeois-landlord rule?

In the name of procurement, what goes on is the harassment of the small and medium peasant producers to force them to part with their grain. Afraid of touching the hoards of the landlords, big peasants and speculators the Congress Government callously refuses to accept any responsibility for feeding the people, for the equitable distribution of foodgrains.

They, therefore, resort to such subterfuges as modified rationing; they announce cheap grainshops where grains are not available.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) denounces this mocking at people's woes and sorrows and demands that the Government must accept full responsibility for equitable distribution of food; must nationalise the wholesale foodgrains trade, must compulsorily procure the entire surplus from land-

lords and big peasants, and offer higher purchase prices to attract the produce of the small peasant.

It must ensure food not only to the city population but also to the agricultural labourers, artisans and other rural poor.

Congress Achievements

In the name of national planning, the Congress Party is building capitalism which has been already liquidated in one-third of the world, and which is being determinedly fought in the remaining two-thirds.

Mounting socialist phrases, the Congress Party is bent on pursuing the capitalist path which has imposed on the country the food crisis and the industrial crisis and is endangering the economic independence of our country.

The Congress leaders advertise that they have done much to industrialise India. What is the reality?

In spite of the three Plans, the proportion of industrial income to agricultural income shows very little change.

Fifteen years of new efforts show only a meagre percentage of our population working as industrial workers in modern factories.

Several of the industries set up through collaboration with the foreign monopolists are still dependents on the imperialists for components and spare parts, and suffer numerous restrictions on production, as well as in the marketing of the produce. Many plants are not in a position to utilise more than 50 to 60 per cent of their installed capacity.

The old established cotton textile industry is dependent upon heavy imports of foreign cotton and machinery and spends more foreign exchange than it earns. A number of cotton textile mills—nearly 40—are already closed when millions have hardly anything to wear.

The three steel mills set up under the public sector do not find an internal market for their produce, even though their full productive capacity is yet to be developed and though the needs of self-reliance demand a much higher production of steel.

In spite of the propagandist talk about self-reliance, the machine-building industry is either absent or just in its initial stage.

The administration of the Congress Party has brought the public sector into complete disgrace. Managed and run by the official bureaucrats, subservient to big business and hostile to the people, the public sector industries have earned notoriety for inefficiency with no promise of minimum profits in the near future.

Not only heavy dependence continues for hardware to equip the armed forces but even the defence industries are dependent for components, materials and technique on Western countries..

The recent Indo-Pak conflict demonstrated how several of our industries were threatened with closure when the Anglo-American imperialists stopped the import of industrial raw materials and their economic 'aid'.

Dependence on American Imperialism

The dependence is the direct result of the Congress policy of building capitalism with aid from imperialists.

The valuable help given by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries has been used not to free our economy, but to bargain for more enslaving loans from the U.S.A.

The Congress Party has been falsely telling the people that government-to-government loans from the West do not endanger economic progress; that it is getting aid without strings. But now everyone knows that the Government, the economy and our foreign policy are all under continuous American pressure.

While falsely accusing our Party of anti-national policies, the Congress Party has been betraying our economic independence to the U.S.A. in the selfish interest of building capitalism. To meet the shortage of food created by its own pro-landlord policies the Congress Government has been importing huge quantities of U.S. surplus foodgrains under Public Law 480 agreements, incurring huge loans and making India precariously dependent on the U.S.

It has been inviting private foreign investment offering them alluring prospects to exploit our people. Thanks to Congress concessions, the rate of profits on British and U.S. investments in India is the highest in the world.

In the name of building an independent India the Congress

Party and its administration have been encouraging joint collaboration agreements of which there are now more than 2,500. Private foreign investments have grown from Rs. 225 crores in 1948 to nearly Rs. 1,000 crores in 1965-66. U.S. private investments have increased from a mere Rs. 11 crores to Rs. 250 crores including investments of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development in the private sector.

This not only entails heavy exploitation but also enables the foreign monopolists to influence our economic life and interfere with our political sovereignty.

And, finally, the Congress rulers have piled up a huge debt of nearly Rs. 4,000 crores—mostly to the U.S.A. and its imperialist partners. Over and above this they seek to borrow another Rs. 4,000 crores for the Fourth Plan, once again mostly from the U.S.A. and its allies. Besides this the Congress Government has been annually incurring huge loans to the U.S.A. And it is incurring fresh loans to pay off old loans.

We will have to make foreign payments of nearly Rs. 300 crores every year in pre-devaluation rupees (and Rs. 400 crores in post-devaluation rupees) for the next five years which means that our export trade will be mortgaged to the West. The loans of the coming five years will increase this burden immeasurably and intensify the process of exploitation.

Freedom Undermined

The U.S. imperialists have been demanding greater and greater facilities for private foreign capital and we are being forced to sanction them as in the case of the fertilizer deal.

Step by step they have been demanding greater freedom for the private sector, removal of all controls—and the Government has been surrendering to them one position after another. Under U.S. pressure Prime Minister Indira Gandhi agreed to the notorious Indo-U.S. Foundation which is an attempt to influence our educational system and nurse American sycophants in our midst. The process of surrender was recently climaxed when the Congress Government betrayed the people and accepted devaluation of the rupee at the behest of the American creditors.

Devaluation means increasing debt burdens for our people, rising prices of food and necessities of life, forcible reduction

of peoples' standard of living all to pay American debts by selling our goods at lower prices to them and buying goods at higher prices.

The stark reality the country faces today is growing dependence for people's food, dependence for resources of the plans, dependence again for the servicing of debts, dependence on imports to get the industries going and dependence for military hardware to equip the armed forces.

In this abject dependence that enables the imperialists and their agencies to dictate to us from the size and pattern of the Fourth Five-Year Plan to the allocations of priorities to different sectors, from what to produce on our land and what to import, how to devalue our rupee and when to do it, what our internal policy should be like and what our foreign policy should be like. The Government, far from strengthening our economic independence, through imperialist aid and collaboration with foreign capital, has undermined the political independence and a grave threat to our sovereignty has arisen.

This is how the Congress Party has been defending our national independence.

Naturally one does not find a word about American penetration and concession to foreign capital in the Congress Manifesto. The Congress Party wants to draw a veil of secrecy over its treachery.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) wants everyone to realise that our country is in great danger; that the treachery of the Congress Party is undermining our freedom.

The Party demands:

Stoppage of all further aid from the U.S.A. and the Western camp and of all repayment obligations till we get out of the crisis;

Nationalisation of all private foreign capital in plantations, mines, oil refineries, trade and industry; and

An end to all foreign monopolist exploitation of our people which is today grinding them into poverty.

The Communist Party of India (M) warns that the dangerous influence of the hated Central Intelligence Agency and Federal Bureau of Investigations men from the U.S.A. is rapidly growing in our country.

They are planted in different departments and at various levels

in the state apparatus under the guise of the numerous American missions that are working in our country.

They are spreading their net over all departments of the state—the police, the civil and military administration and the cultural, educational and academic institutions.

The enslaving technique, practised by the American imperialists over decades with Latin American countries, is actively pressed into service in our country.

Thus the Congress path of dependence on foreign aid and collaboration, instead of putting the nation on the road to independent development, is transforming the country into the hunting ground for U.S. neo-colonialism.

Unless this pernicious path is rejected and the party in power pursuing it is defeated, India's independence itself will be imperilled.

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Hoax of Land Reform

The country has been passing through a severe food crisis with tens of millions facing starvation and hunger. Why this food crisis? Why the abject dependence on American imports which endangers our free existence?

The food crisis, the misery following it, the danger to political independence arising out of it are all the direct result of the Congress policy of allying with landlords and defrauding the tiller of the right to land.

Land to the tiller is the key to the solution of our food crisis, the key to the expansion of the rural market to make rapid industrialisation possible.

With land transferred to the tiller, and helped by a democratic Government in the matter of credit facilities, application of scientific methods and co-operative endeavours, the Indian peasant will work miracles of production which will permanently end the crisis.

This has been the experience of all countries which have been successful in solving their food problem. This has been the miraculous experience of People's China.

But the Congress Party, with its alliance with the landlords, has prevented precisely this solution.

Despite the fabulous compensation of Rs. 600 crores paid to

the statutory landlords in the name of abolition of landlordism, very little land has accrued to the agricultural workers and poor peasants. Surplus lands of landlords were made to disappear with fake partitions and book adjustments. By influencing official machinery the big landlords have been able to occupy government fallow and forest lands thus adding to the acreage in their possession. 5 per cent of rural households at the top hold as much as 37.5 per cent of the total land under cultivation while at the other end nearly 30 per cent of the rural households hold no land at all. They are the land-hungry labourers who are totally dispossessed. Another 30 per cent of the rural households hold only five per cent of the land under cultivation and constitute a nearly-dispossessed stratum.

The much-talked-of Congress agrarian reforms like abolition of intermediaries and land to the tiller constitute a big hoax on the toiling peasantry.

The tenants' protection laws have turned out to be laws for evicting lakhs of peasants from the land.

Agricultural development measures, extension services, package programmes constitute a big hoax on the mass of peasantry. Financial assistance and loans advanced by the Government including those from cooperative credit societies, are appropriated mainly by the big landowners. Congress policy has strengthened the hold of this small coterie on the rural economy.

The lower sections of the peasantry have neither the resources to develop their farms nor are they protected from the ravages of the usurer, the grain-profitteer or the landlord. In large areas and in many states, landlords still take away from one-third to three-fourths of the peasants' produce by way of rent. Rural indebtedness, thanks to Congress policies, stands at Rs. 3,000 crores, and not even two per cent of the loans are provided by the state and agencies controlled by it.

The peasants must be paying not less than Rs. 300 crores by way of interest alone.

Ruin stares the small peasant in the face.

The agricultural labourer, the biggest single section of the peasantry, is the most neglected under Congress Raj [rule].

Unemployment and underemployment constantly haunt these pauperised millions. For 180 days in the year they are unemployed.

The minimum wage legislation for agricultural labourers has become a huge fraud. In most of the States the minimum fixed by law is below the existing wage. They are denied education facilities. They live in the most squalid surroundings and Congress Governments do not provide them with minimum facilities regarding medical care or other health measures. They are left a free prey to pestilence and disease.

The Congress Governments do not provide them with land for house-sites and leave them defenceless against the land monopolists.

The Congress Governments could not find time to distribute the 100 million acres of cultivable waste, pasture and permanent fallow land among them; on the other hand, they have been forcibly ejected from these lands wherever they have taken to cultivating them. Their struggle for land has been ruthlessly crushed like all other struggles. Ruination of Indian Agriculture, destitution for the rural population, famine and food crisis for the people—these are the logical results of Congress policies.

The Communist Party of India (M) demands that these policies must be rejected and defeated.

It demands immediate distribution of the hundred million acres of cultivable land among the agricultural workers and poor peasants; it also demands taking over of the land of the big landlords and their distribution gratis among agricultural workers and peasants; drastic reduction of rent; abolition of land tax and irrigation and other cesses and surcharges on all uneconomic holdings; free supply of water for irrigation purposes to poor peasants; cancellation of all usurer's debts; and scaling down of other debts owed by agricultural workers, poor peasants and other sections of the rural people; adequate financial help to them for agricultural production; guarantee of fair price for the small producer. It demands a decent minimum wage for agricultural workers, and an act guaranteeing it; provision of house-sites, education and medical facilities for them and government help to construct houses. It further demands the removal of social discrimination—still rampant under Congress rule.

It further demands an end to exploitation of the entire peasantry through the capitalist market by means of price manipulations; the exploitation by foreign monopolists who purchase certain commercial crops in bulk and attempt to enforce lower

prices on the Indian producer.

Equality—Congress Type

Fifteen years of Congress planning have led to an enormous concentration of wealth and means of production in the hands of a few people. While the Congress Party was declaring that reduction of economic disparity was one of the objectives of its planning, wealth was being amassed by the big capitalists through these very plans.

The total capital assets of the modern Indian capitalist class stood at Rs. 900 crores in 1948. By 1960 they stood at Rs. 3,000 crores.

Just half a dozen big business houses have come to possess more than 50 per cent of this total private capital.

Two of these, Tatas and Birlas, have assets worth Rs. 700 crores—nearly 25 per cent of the total private capital.

Some 50 to 60 big establishments have come to monopolise several branches of industry and commerce while five to six banks control the major part of the banking business.

At the other end stands the exploited worker who earns from Rs. 50 to 100 all told. This is how disparity is being ended.

This growing concentration of wealth and means of production, leading to monopolistic combines, puts the economic life of the people at the mercy of these financial pirates, intensifies the exploitation of the workers, enables the monopolist to fleece the people through high prices and creates a danger to the democratic rights of the people.

The monopolists breed political reaction, require under-mining of democracy to exploit the people, and stand for making further concessions to imperialism.

They together with other big bourgeois elements demand more concessions for the private sector, removal of all controls so that the private capitalists, foreign and Indian, can freely loot the people.

And the Congress Government has been surrendering to their demands, giving new scope to the private sector, and more opportunities to the private capitalists to exploit the workers. This is how socialism is being built by the Congress.

At the same time the workers and employees are being ex-

ploited in the most brutal fashion. Only 40 per cent of the working class has its dearness allowance linked to the cost of living index. The rest are entirely dependent on the mercy of the employers and the Government. Besides, the cost of living index itself has been found to be fraudulent, thus depriving lakhs of their legitimate dearness allowance. In recent years the real wage of the working class has gone down by 14 per cent—and is the same as it was in 1939.

Fifteen years of planning has achieved this result.

Besides, the condition of workers in unorganised industries, as well as those whose dearness allowance is not linked to the cost of living, beggars all description. Teachers, government employees and other sections of middle class employees have been denied the right to have their dearness allowance linked to the cost of living. The *ad hoc* increases, given under mass pressure, fall far below the requirements, pushing them below the requirements, pushing them below the starvation line.

In spite of all the pay commissions, wage boards and *ad hoc* increases, no section has made any advance so far as real wages are concerned.

The working class is further being attacked by the denial of its legitimate claims to an adequate bonus—which hitherto partially compensated the rapid erosion of his pay-pocket. Taking advantage of the provision for minimum bonus in the Bonus Act, the capitalists are refusing to go beyond the minimum thus reducing the Act to a farce. This is a direct attack on the wages of the workers.

Everywhere all legitimate demands for a rise in wages are being resisted.

Over and above this, the employers are imposing increased workload on the workers, making labour unbearable. Lockouts and retrenchment are increasing; and the workers have also to fight for getting pay for work done; wages are sometimes not paid for months.

Mass retrenchment is also facing employees in the public and private sector. Automation has been introduced by the foreign oil companies leading to unemployment among middle class employees. The Government refuses to interfere, because it dares not offend the foreign companies.

The Government-owned Life Insurance Corporation itself is

introducing automation threatening the employees with loss of jobs. The Government has further borrowed a number of computers for the Airlines Corporation.

Registered unemployment in cities has already reached the more than two million mark. The figure of middle class unemployed is nearly a million. And yet the Government wants to add to this total.

The struggles of the working class and employees against these policies are daily increasing. Strikes, protest actions, bandhs—every day witnesses one or the other form of struggle.

The Congress Government uses the Defence of India Rules, Preventive Detention Act and other measures of repression to crush the struggles of the working class, government employees and other employees. Mass arrests take place. Prohibition of meetings, total suppression of the right to strike, arrests of trade union leaders and police firings and lathi-charges—these are the methods used by the Congress to choke the legitimate movement of the workers. And the employers supplement them by victimisation of trade union leaders, putting up rival unions, encouraging the Congress-sponsored Indian National Trade Union Congress to break workers' unity and strikes.

The Communist Party of India (M) demands an end to this policy of oppression and exploitation of the working class. It demands: (1) nationalisation of the concerns of monopolists and of such industry as is immediately necessary in the interest of the people, nationalisation of foreign trade; (2) guarantee of living wage to workers and employees; (3) full neutralisation of rise in the cost of living; (4) right to adequate bonus and linking of Dearness allowance with the cost of living index for all workers and employees; (5) revision of wage-scale of all sections of employees including teachers and government employees; (6) full guarantee of trade union rights for all including government employees and immunity from police interference; (7) recognition of trade unions; (8) stoppage of all retrenchment and restoration of jobs of those retrenched; and (9) scrapping of automation.

The 'Fourth Five-Year Plan

Notwithstanding the phrase-mongering in its election manifesto, the Congress Party is bent on pursuing these same anti-

popular policies. This is evident from the draft of the Fourth Plan. The new draft gives up priority for basic industries under American pressure, places them lowest in the order of importance and shows the Congress talk of self-reliance to be pure propaganda. It gives first priority to export industries, i.e., for payment of debt obligations to the U.S.A. thus virtually mortgaging our economic activity to the imperialists. And yet it wants to borrow Rs. 4,000 crores, mainly from the U.S.A. to bind us still further to them.

The targets announced are dependent on 'aid' from the U.S.A., and cannot be taken seriously. Besides, experience of the Third Plan shows that Congress planning cannot reach even moderate targets. Therefore, neither the target of 120 million tons of food-grains, nor 12 million tons of steel can be taken seriously.

Land will not be transferred to the tiller and the food target will not be reached. And, lastly, under pressure of the American creditors, the Congress planners have openly announced that there would be no rise in the living standards of the people in the next five years. In the name of price-control, they have advocated a policy of forcing the masses to bear the burden of price-increases, delinking of Dearness Allowance from the cost of living index, and of opposition to rise in wages. This is how the Congress Party intends to function in the next five years.

Congress Party Disunites India

No party talks more glibly than the Congress about national integration and unity of India; and yet none has done more to disrupt Indian unity than the Congress Party.

Whose policies have driven the Nagaland people to demand independence? Whose policies have driven the Mizos to desperation so that the Congress Government is attempting to "pacify" them through the intervention of the army? And who is responsible for a similar unrest among the hills people of Assam.

The bourgeois-landlord Government, accustomed to suppress and exploit the people, is totally incapable of solving the problem of the border people in a democratic way. It only knows the use of bayonets driving them to demand secession.

Has the Congress Party succeeded in solving the Kashmir problem and winning over the people of Kashmir? The people

of Kashmir still continue to be sullen, yet the Congress Government shows no willingness to solve the problem in consultation with the popular parties and people of Kashmir. It believes only in detaining and imprisoning the leaders.

The same class policies are driving the Adivasis (scheduled tribes) inside India to turn away from the Congress conception of unity and integration. The Bastar massacre is a standing witness to Congress cruelties and hypocritical talk about integration.

The capitalist path of the Congress Party is leading to disintegration in other directions as well. Under it, the beggarly advance that is taking place in industry is getting concentrated in three or four States, while the other states make no progress.

Because of this disparity on the one hand, and the irresistible urge generated in the people for local industrial development on the other, every new industry contemplated by the planners becomes an apple of discord.

This is exactly what comes handy to the rising bourgeois groups of various linguistic states to divide and disrupt the unity of the nation-wide workers' and peasants' revolutionary movement and along with it the very fabric of the multi-national Indian Union. The river waters disputes, the boundary demarcation disputes which are exploited by Congress leaders of those states to fan provincial hatred are a portent of the things to come.

The revolutionary unity of the working people of India, and the further progress of the Indian Union, urgently demand the removal of the big bourgeoisie from leading positions in the state and the rejection of their disruptionist capitalist path.

The Congress Party is preserving all the moribund forces which hinder national unity. Instead of eradicating casteism it fans and promotes it, especially during elections. Its talk of secularism is pure propaganda. The Congress Government pursues a policy which instead of promoting secularism helps religious orthodoxy and bias in public life.

The Communist Party of India (M) demands that the Congress Government must abandon its attempt to use force against the people of the border states and seek a peaceful democratic settlement of the problem.

It demands ruthless punishment of officials involved in the

Bastar massacre and full justice to Adivasis including establishment of autonomous regions.

It demands that there should be no attempt to annul the special status of the State of Jammu and Kashmir and that the problem be settled in consultation with the people and popular parties of the State.

Language Policy

The Congress Party did its best to disrupt national unity by its thoughtless attempt to substitute Hindi in place of English instead of conceding equal status to all the languages of the Union. This disruptive move raised a big struggle in Tamilnad (Madras) which was suppressed with police violence. The Congress Party is not interested in promoting the languages of the people and carrying on the administration of the people in their languages. It is not interested in ensuring education upto the highest level in the mother-tongue of the peoples of various states. The result is English still continues to dominate, while the languages of the people are not made the languages of the administration.

Hindi chauvinism raises anti-Hindi chauvinism and the gainer in the bargain is English.

The Communist Party of India (M) demands the right of people to receive instructions in their mother-tongue in educational institutions; the use of the national language of the particular state as the language of administration in all its public and state institutions, as well as its use as the medium of education in the state upto the highest standard; provision of the use of the language of a minority or region where necessary in addition to the language of the state. Use of Hindi as an all-India language will not be obligatory but will be encouraged as a means of intercourse between the people of different states. Adhere to the principle of replacing English by the regional language. Transition from English to Hindi at the centre should be simultaneous with the same from English to the regional languages in the states; the preparation for this transition which is being made by the Centre with regard to Hindi should also be made with all necessary central assistance in states in regard to regional languages. At the same time, for

the transition period, the duration of which should be decided with the consent of the non-Hindi-speaking regions. English should be given the status of an associate administrative language. Equality of all national languages in parliament and central administration will be recognised. Members of parliament will have the right to speak in any national language and simultaneous translation will be provided in all national languages. All acts, government orders and resolutions will be made available in all national languages. Urdu language and its script will be protected.

Undermining of Democracy

The Congress Government at the centre and in the states are unable to rule the country with the normal process of law. Despite the repeated demands of all sections of the people for the withdrawal of the Emergency (restrictions) the Congress Government keeps it in operation to beat down popular struggles. The Defence of India Act continues to exist and new ordinances are being promulgated by the state governments to launch wanton attacks on the liberties of the people. The fundamental rights of the people and the Indian Constitution have been reduced to a farce.

The undermining of democracy has gone a long way in our country and the state is rapidly assuming the attributes of a police state.

Detentions without trial of thousands participating in struggles for livelihood; mass shootings and arrests; torture in prison; brutal treatment of men, women and children—these are the methods by which the Congress Party is maintaining its rule.

Today no one escapes the indignities and brutalities of the police. The professor, the teacher, the student, the lawyer and doctor, the workers, peasants, agricultural workers and employees—all are tasting the flavour of police raj. Neither workers' quarters, college hostels, professors' residences, nor the seats of learning are free from the invasion of these defenders of law and order. The ruling Party also hires goonda (Thug) gangs to attack the democratic movement.

Congress law and order has assumed the aspect of class

terror.

The Congress Party has shown the worst contempt for parliamentary democratic principles. Elected legislatures are summarily dissolved, as in Kerala in 1959 and 1966, and President's rule is foisted on the people whenever the interests of the bourgeois-landlord clique require it.

Elected Members of Parliament and state legislatures belonging to our Party and other democratic opposition parties are detained arbitrarily under the DIR and PD Act, members fighting for people's demands are physically thrown out of the house of Parliament and legislatures.

Elected Gram Panchayats (village governments), Municipalities, and Block Samitis (local committees) are suspended whenever the opposition get a majority in them.

The Congress Government denies real autonomy to the states and union territories. By transferring more and more powers to the centre, the Government is negating the autonomy of constituent units and turning the federal structure of the Indian Union into a unitary one.

The so-called decentralisation of power has led to farcical bodies of Panchayats and Block Samitis where the real power is in the hands of officials and not the people. They in cooperation with the landlord, the money-lender and the local Congress boss rule the roost.

The Communist Party of India (M) warns the people that the Congress rule is a danger to our democracy and the precursor to a police state. The Party demands withdrawal of Emergency, of the DIR Act and other repressive legislations, abolition of President's special powers, full liberties to the people, immunity of MPs and members of legislative assemblies from arrests, a halt to police firings and lathi-charges, punishment of all guilty officials and direct subordination of the police and the army to people's will and interests.

Congress and Minorities

Under Congress rule the Muslim minority which constitutes five crores of our population is in fact discriminated against, particularly in the matter of education and employment opportunities, despite the constitutional provision against any dis-

crimination. They have benefited very little from the meagre progress which the country has registered and their backwardness continues. It is not good for the country that the members of this community should suffer from a sense of the frustration and be under the constant threat of being dubbed as anti-national Pak agents. It is highly derogatory to them as citizens of India. During last year's Indo-Pakistan conflict hundreds of them were arrested on suspicion, their crime being that they were Muslims.

There is a tendency to decry every demand of theirs as communal and stifle their voice. During elections the Congress Party often uses threats and intimidation to secure their votes.

Urdu, which is dominantly the language of millions of Muslims in northern India, is deliberately suppressed by the Governments of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. In communal riots their property and lives are not safe; they become easy victims of Jan Sangh and Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh fanatics; they find government measures to protect their lives totally inadequate, often leaving them defenceless before their attackers.

The Communist Party of India (M) demands that this discrimination against the Muslim minority must end; Urdu be given its proper place as one of the languages of the Union; it should be recognised as the second regional language in the States of U.P., Bihar and Delhi and other States where there are large Urdu-speaking minorities and it should be protected and facilities given for its development; schools for teaching Urdu be provided in Urdu-speaking areas; all religious and minority rights be guaranteed; and discrimination in jobs be ended. The social barrier even now existing between Hindus and Muslims must be removed by conscious efforts to safeguard minority rights.

The spirit of Hindu chauvinism encouraged by the Congress leaders in various ways and the glorification of obscurantism create misgivings in the minds of the other religious minorities raising the fear of a Hindu state and helps the forces of disintegration.

Scheduled Castes

The law prohibiting the practice of untouchability adorns

the pages of the Indian Constitution. And yet the plight of the 50 million scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other down-trodden communities remains the same.

Funds allotted for their betterment and advance and government jobs reserved for them do not touch even a fringe of the problem. And yet these funds also remain unspent. One of the main demands of these sections is for land—and it is exactly this the Congress Government denies in the interests of the landlords. By educating a few, and giving them jobs in the administration, the Congress Government only makes a show of improving their conditions. In reality the masses belonging to these sections continue deeper and deeper in the mire of poverty and remain socially ostracized, still subject to unheard of atrocities from others.

The Communist Party of India (M) demands a drastic solution—demands first of all distribution of land to these sections, accompanied by other aids; and rigorous implementation of anti-untouchability laws. It also demands more financial allocations for implementing necessary schemes for their benefits.

Foreign Policy

What is the foreign policy that is being pursued by the Congress Government? Is it an independent one of serving India's national interests and strengthening India's independence?

Such an independent foreign policy can be pursued only in alliance with the camp of peace and socialism and all the freedom-loving anti-imperialist countries of the world and in opposition to the aggressive plans of the U.S. and other imperialists. Such a policy can be pursued only in firm opposition to a nuclear war, to all imperialist wars, to colonialism and neo-colonialism and in firm support to peace, national liberation struggles and the principles of co-existence.

India's espousal of the Bandung principles had been hailed by the socialist and anti-imperialist forces and its non-alignment policy in the past had earned the praise of freedom-loving forces.

But today India's prestige has fallen low among the anti-imperialist forces and nations; she has, in fact, become, in their eyes, an object of suspicion.

This has happened because the Congress Government, while mouthing phrases about non-alignment, has been slowly taking India away from the anti-imperialist peace-loving camp and towards the U.S. imperialist camp. This treacherous shift is a betrayal of the interest of the nation and is only in the narrow selfish interests of the bourgeois-landlord ruling classes.

The growth of monopolies and big business and their growing collaboration with foreign monopolies under government aegis and the abject dependence on the U.S.A. for food imports and plan aid have led to this treacherous shift.

The Government's acceptance of U.S. military aid in the name of national defence has only made the country more dependent on the U.S.A., rendered difficult a solution of the dispute with China. The annual defence expenditure of more than Rs. 1,000 crores has, apart from the crushing burdens imposed on the people, led to further dependence on the U.S.A. and consequent surrenders to its dictates in quick succession at the cost of our sovereignty. Among these concessions which were reducing non-alignment to a farce were the Voice of America Deal episode, acquiescence in the operations of the U.S. Seventh Fleet and the Anglo-American plan to establish a military base in the Indian Ocean.

What has been even more shameful has been the Government's stand in regard to Vietnam. Instead of a clearcut stand of all support to Vietnam's freedom struggle and stopping the U.S. imperialist aggression in Asia which is in India's own vital interests, the Government acquiesces in the U.S. aggression, helps the South Vietnam puppets by sending trucks and steel from the Soviet-built Bhilai plant, praises the peaceful intentions of President Johnson and even peddles the bogus peace proposals of the U.S. imperialists round the world.

The Government thus betrays both Vietnam and India in its subservience to the U.S.A.

In place of opposition to U.S. imperialism and neo-colonialism, opposition to Socialist China has become the main feature of India's foreign policy. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi went to the limit when in the joint communique signed with U.S. President Lyndon Johnson, she agreed to become a partner in the U.S. policy of containing China. Instead of breaking the deadlock over the Colombo proposals and settling the India-

China dispute peacefully, the Congress leaders have been dragging India towards the camp of U.S. imperialism, in the name of national defence.

The U.S. imperialists have not been slow in taking advantage of this situation. U.S. Military officials swarm all over the country and have unhindered access to the most vital strategic places, they have demanded and won the right to make on-the-spot inspections of our arms during a border conflict. It is India that is being contained by the U.S. imperialists.

Not only in relation to China and Vietnam, the Government of India now welcomes almost every reactionary development anywhere in the world. Foreign Minister Swaran Singh welcomed with unequalled lack of shame the developments in Indonesia following the coup organised by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency and the massacre of lakhs of communists and democrats, a coup that threatens Indonesia's existence as an independent nation.

Two decades after independence, the Congress regime continues to keep India in the imperialist British Commonwealth, though repeatedly intimidated and insulted by the former oppressors. What is even more shameful is that India lends support to British imperialist plans like the creation of Malaysia which was meant to checkmate freedom-loving Indonesia. and inside the Commonwealth, India often takes a treacherous or equivocal position on the question of freedom, specially of African countries. On the question of Rhodesia, when some African countries boycotted the recent Commonwealth Conference and some others took a forthright position to unmask the utterly reactionary and hypocritical policies of the British Labour Government, India's Foreign Minister Swaran Singh did not join his voice with these countries but joined those who were prepared to compromise on the freedom of the Rhodesian people and acted as British go-between to the wavering elements. Free India's Foreign Minister boasted, he had saved the imperialist Commonwealth. Can subservience go any further?

Under the leadership of the Congress Party, India's foreign policy is rapidly losing its independence and becoming subservient to the U.S.A. Economic dependence is leading to political dependence.

The Communist Party of India (M) warns that this might

prove the beginning of the loss of our political independence and calls upon the people to be vigilant and fight this treacherous policy. It demands a foreign policy firmly opposed to all imperialist wars and directed towards the elimination of the danger of nuclear wars; policy based on opposition to U.S. imperialism and colonialism and support to the freedom-struggle of all peoples; a policy of firm friendship with the Socialist camp and of solidarity with Afro-Asian countries.

It demands that India should quit the Commonwealth.

In the interests of our own freedom and well-being, the Party demands that the Government should take initiative to have direct talks for a peaceful settlement with China. Friendly relations between the two countries are in the interests of the freedom of Asia, only imperialists gain by a conflict.

The Party demands a peaceful settlement of all disputes with Pakistan so that the forces of reaction and imperialism can no longer exploit the disputes to the detriment of the freedom of both countries. The Tashkent Declaration was a step in the interests of both the peoples, a military conflict between the two only plays into the hands of U.S. imperialism. While demanding a peaceful settlement, the party also warns the people that once again interested parties are busy creating a tense atmosphere on our borders and that as the elections approach these efforts will be intensified with a view to reaping electoral advantages.

Education

The Congress Party and its administration have miserably failed in advancing the cause of education.

In two decades of its rule the Congress Government has made no attempt to effect a basic change in the pattern of education which the foreign rulers had introduced. It has failed to reorientate our education to fulfil the needs of our newly-freed people and serve the cause of national uplift and democracy. Under the British, the primary object of education was to turn out clerks and slaves for the foreign overlords. Under the Congress regime its aim is to train the younger generation in the service of the capitalist masters of India.

In 1966, after two decades of Congress rule, only 44 per cent

of the age group attended Class V and only 24 per cent attended Class VIII. Our planners want another two decades before elementary education with a seven years' course is made universal.

Secondary education is today available only for 18 per cent of the age group while in all Western countries universal secondary education upto the age of 16 is a common feature.

Progress in the education of girls is still slower. They form only 25 per cent of the total enrolment in middle and 20 per cent in the secondary schools.

The percentage of drop-outs in the primary stage is as high as 60 per cent. The constitutional directive of free and compulsory education for all children upto the age of 14 is as distant a goal as ever.

Education doled out to the poorer classes in villages and municipal schools is of a poor quality, a large percentage of the boys from those sections are often compelled to purchase seats for their children in Kindergarten schools, grammar and public schools. This of course is beyond the reach of the poorer sections. For seats in medical and engineering colleges students have sometime to pay ten to fifteen thousand rupees by way of donation—only the better-off being able to afford it.

On the other hand, the teachers, particularly of the elementary and second grade schools, are paid badly and have to resort to countrywide struggles for minimum pay and better conditions.

Parity of conditions and salaries between teachers of Government schools and private schools is not secured. There is no linking of Dearness Allowance with the cost of living. The salary-scales are farcical and other minimum conditions like housing are not guaranteed.

And, above all the minimum facilities for the intellectual development of the teachers are not provided for, facilities which must be given to increase the efficiency of the teaching profession as well as its dignity and capacity to influence the generation under its training.

The conditions of university teachers also require a drastic change.

The Government is callously slow in giving a technological and science orientation to the higher education system. Nepot-

ism and favouritism haunt even the research and science institutions. Quite a good percentage of the people who were enlisted under the widely advertised "Scientists' Pool" after long efforts and persuasion are still unabsorbed in research and other institutions and their names are being deleted from the rolls. In their place third-rate experts from the U.S. and other Western countries are imported and paid high salaries. The drain of scientific talents continues as before.

Less than 2 per cent of the relevant age-group is able to get university education; and less than 0.44 per cent enrol themselves in science courses.

University higher education is thus a luxury of the few, denied to the overwhelming majority of the young men coming from poorer families.

Yet the Government and its spokesmen always argue as if there is too much of university education and are hatching schemes to restrict it.

Even with the present restricted availability of university education, there are tens of thousands of graduates who do not get employment under the Congress regime. The total number of educated unemployed—graduates and under-graduates—is nearly a million.

Under the Congress regime the sanctity of the educational institutions is repeatedly violated by the police who invade universities and colleges under the least excuse. Rights and liberties of students are suppressed and their protests drowned in blood. In some places police commissioners are appointed as advisers in the matter of inter-university life, outraging the freedom of educational institutions.

The Communist Party of India (M) demands (1) upgrading of primary schools into schools with seven years' course; (2) compulsory free elementary education with a seven years' course; (3) free secondary education; (4) overcoming the lag between boys' and girls' education; (5) promotion of mother-tongue as the medium of instruction at all stages of education; (6) greater promotion of technical education; (7) raising the quality of education; (8) meeting all the legitimate demands of the teaching profession and removing the present disgraceful pittance called salaries—so that the quality of teaching as well as the dignity of the profession is restored.

Women

Women, this vast section of our people, continue to be plagued by lack of education, of opportunities for free development and are victims of backward obscurantist customs and prejudices.

The Congress Government has hardly done anything to change this situation. Even the meagre advance in education is not equally shared between boys and girls—the educational progress of the latter lagging far behind that of the former. No nation can progress if it allows its women to be enchained to backwardness, ignorance and superstition and does not give them equal treatment as citizens of the country.

Women coming from the working masses are the special victims of the situation—the percentage of literacy among them being the lowest.

The Communist Party of India (M) demands special facilities for promoting education among women, especially women from the toiling masses—without education all talk of equality is pure moonshine.

The Party also demands removal of social disabilities from which women, not only of the toiling masses, suffer. The old unequal laws, sanctified by religious superstition, continue to hamper the cause of women's freedom from feudal customs. The Party demands equal rights for women in such matters as enforcement of marriage laws and divorce, admission to professions and services and equal pay for equal work. It opposes every kind of discrimination against women.

Artisans and Others

The Congress Governments have inflicted untold miseries on the small artisans, handloom weavers, shop assistants and others who are often scattered over wide areas and are consequently unable to make their strength felt through organisation.

Today lakhs of handloom weavers are placed in a similar position, their labour depreciated, their looms idle, their stocks lying unsold.

Shop assistants and the other artisans, especially the self-employed ones, are left defenceless against rocketing prices and

are living on the starvation line.

The Party demands that this victimisation be stopped and that they be given adequate wages and compensation against the rising prices.

Refugees

The Congress Government has shown brutal callousness towards lakhs of refugees who are undergoing a life of extreme misery and suffering. The question of their livelihood has not been solved; they all are undergoing extreme privations, and many are faced with outright starvation. Instead of taking urgent steps to meet the situation, the Congress Government has decided to close down the rehabilitation department under the false plea that only some residuary problems remain to be solved.

This is nothing but a callous attempt to evade its responsibility towards the refugees.

The Party has consistently fought against this inhuman policy in the past and will continue to do so in future so that full justice is secured to the refugees.

The Party demands that the Government should provide shelter and gainful occupation to all categories of refugees and provide adequate funds for the purpose.

Culture

With the overwhelming mass of workers and peasants deprived of education, culture under Congress rule remains a prisoner of the bourgeois-landlord classes. Institutions like the Sahitya (literature) Akademi, Lalit Kala (art) Akademi and Sangeet Natak (music and dance) Akademi are just show-pieces of the Central Government. The Congress leaders, under the garb of protecting and guarding the so-called national traditions and social values, seek to resurrect what is hidebound and reactionary in them discarding everything living and dynamic in the modern world. Only the decadent and dying Western culture which does not even represent the spirit of bourgeois renaissance is accepted as something new. Progressive writers, artists, and men of real culture are put on the black list and

sycophants and favourites are promoted.

Cinema is a free field for money-bags to exploit and profit. The progressive-minded producers and artists are crushed by the cut-throat competition of big money on the one hand and discouraging imposts of different kinds on the film industry on the other, and eventually have either to leave the field or sell their talents to earn their livelihood. The censor boards which are supposed to act as the custodians of social morals and national cultural values, act more as political censors, and resort to all kinds of ridiculous restrictions on Indian films, while they show utter helplessness in the case of imported films with their orgies of sex, of blood and violence. All India Radio neither educates nor entertains but plays the role of a cheap trumpet for government propaganda. Nepotism, favouritism and bias against all forward-looking ideas is the norm, and rule of its management.

Armed Forces and the People

The Congress Party talks a lot about national defence but the policies it has been pursuing have landed the country into abject dependence on Western powers for defence material which is endangering our independence.

The growing economic dependence on the U.S.A., the miserable progress in industrial development, the shift in foreign policy—all have led to a situation in which we are more dependent than ever for military hardware and strategic weapons on the imperialists. This dependence prevents us from raising our voice of protest against such manoeuvres of American imperialism as the movement of the Seventh Fleet in the Indian Ocean though they directly menace our defence.

Besides, in the name of securing American help in the India-China conflict, large number of American officers and military missions operate in the country and they know every detail about our defence. There can be no effective defence unless this policy is defeated and the edge of our defence is turned against imperialism.

The Congress Party's administration follows British methods of building a mercenary type of army totally divorced from the people and based on the incentive of jobs and careers. Students

for officers' schools and academies are recruited mainly from the upper classes, while those coming from the common people have to undergo a rigorous test of police scrutiny. Anyone suspected of the slightest political awakening is rejected on the basis of police reports.

The jawan (soldier) of the army, coming mostly from the peasantry, is ill-paid and shares the discontent of the ill-paid and down-trodden peasantry. On recruitment he finds a glaring contrast between his scanty pay and the high salaries of the top-most officials.

While he is allowed the right to vote, he is not to be approached by any political party; nor is he to read any political literature. Servicemen are denied the right to contact even their parliamentary representatives for redress of their grievances.

This, however, does not apply to the generals and top officials who, in the main, are largely drawn from the bourgeois-landlord classes and get their education in exclusive institutions. They carry on their politics in their own way behind the curtains.

The powers-that-be are afraid of raising the democratic and patriotic consciousness of the jawan and prefer him to be an obedient tool. The steel wall built between the armed forces and the mass of the people by the former British rulers is perpetuated. Under the specious plea of maintaining law and order, the armed forces are often pitted against the people fighting for their legitimate demands. Narrow class fear haunts the Congress leaders and the higher national and patriotic interests are subordinated to it.

Jana Sangh and Swatantra

The Communist Party of India (M) warns the people against fighting for their legitimate demands. Narrow class fear haunts der against Congress misrule, essentially represent the same class interests as the Congress.

They demand a more naked and avowed pro-American orientation in foreign policy; a more open and avowed orientation towards capitalists and landlords in the internal sphere and a more repressive policy towards the people. Internationally they support American imperialism more blatantly—as on the

question of Vietnam.

Their policies only facilitate further American penetration and further sellout of people's interests to private exploiters. By their criticism they only seek to channelise popular discontent towards themselves, so that the people are cheated once more by the representatives of the same exploiting classes.

Above all, they are deeply anti-Communist and declare their hostility to the Communist Party and the working class movement. They press the Government to attack the Party and ban it. Their anti-communism reveals their direct connections with the ruling circles of monopolists, big bourgeoisie and landlords. They are thus in open opposition to the progressive forces in the country.

That is why a section of Congress leaders, including some Cabinet members, are in league with them. The RSS, the Hindu semi-fascist communal organisation, is especially favoured by some of them.

Dange Revisionists

The Communist Party of India (M) is the party of the working class of India, uniting within itself the best elements from the workers, peasants and the middle classes who uphold the banner of Marxism-Leninism and devote themselves to an uncompromising struggle against the present bourgeois-landlord Government. It carries forward the revolutionary traditions of the communist movement in the country and unflinchingly serves the cause of the people.

The Dange group of revisionists split away from the Party to pursue their opportunist line of class-collaboration. If today it carries the name of the old Communist Party and its symbol, it is only because the Election Commission is pleased to give it to them.

Neither ideologically nor organisationally have they the right to call themselves by the old name.

Taking advantage of the bourgeois chauvinism in connection with the India-China conflict, they joined hands with the bourgeois-landlord government to open the country to American penetration—the dire effects of which we are seeing today.

Taking advantage of their majority in the Central Executive

Committee of the Party, they supported the notorious Defence of India Act under which their own partymen were arrested and which was later on used to crush the popular movement; utilising their majority in the All India Trade Union Congress leadership they entered into the treacherous industrial truce agreement which was used by the employers to attack the workers. In the 1963 workers' march to parliament they refused to put forward the demand for release of detenus. This has been the bitter experience of our Party in connection with the revisionists.

The Communist Party of India (M) seeks to fully mobilise the people against the Congress in the coming elections. Without such a mobilisation, without taking every possible step to isolate the Congress and avoid splitting of anti-Congress votes, it will not be possible to give a fitting rebuff to the Congress and defeat it in as many places as possible.

The revisionists are professing their opposition to Congress rule and are stating that they want to defeat the Congress at the polls. They propagate that they seek an electoral front with us against the Congress and want to oust it from power. Therefore, in spite of our bitter experience with the revisionists and serious differences with them, our Party has expressed its willingness to seek electoral adjustments with them so that the Congress may not benefit by the splitting of opposition votes. Our Party is confident that the people will test the sincerity of each party in the elections and keep strict vigilance on the future activities of all parties which today pledge to isolate the Congress Party.

The Communist Party of India (M) is the only party that stands firmly and consistently for socialism. Socialisation of means of production under a proletarian State alone will abolish exploitation of man by man and finally solve the problems of poverty and impoverishment.

No fundamental problem of the Indian people can be solved under the present bourgeois-landlord State led by the big bourgeoisie. The Communist Party of India (M) firmly believes that the road to socialism can be opened only through the establishment of a State of People's Democracy, led by the working class, replacing the present bourgeois-landlord state, led by the big bourgeoisie. This can be achieved only by developing deter-

mined mass struggle on the basis of growing unity and consciousness of the people. The Communist Party of India (M) works determinedly for organising people's struggles for livelihood, democracy, and power.

In the coming elections the Communist Party of India (M) aims at removing the Congress monopoly of power in as many states as possible, improving and increasing the strength of the democratic opposition and above all of the CPI (M) in all the states and at the centre.

The Communist Party of India (M) calls upon the people to reject Congress policies and vote for the Party's policies.

The Party is the only party which has been faithful and true to the people under the most difficult circumstances. Denounced as traitors by the Congress and Dange revisionists, the CPI (M) continued to fight for the cause of the people, fight for the genuine national interests of the Indian people and had the courage to demand peaceful settlement with China and warn the country against American penetration in the name of defence.

Once again on the question of Indo-Pakistan conflict it is our Party that warned the people against the game of American imperialism while the revisionists openly walked into the trap trailing behind the big bourgeoisie. While advocating proper measures against the infiltrators, our Party alone demanded an end to the conflict and peaceful settlement of the dispute.

Incensed by the steadfast loyalty of the members of the CPI (M) to the masses and genuine national interests, the Congress Government launched its second round of repression against the Party in 1964, arresting more than a thousand leaders and detaining them for 16 months. Yet the Party continued to fight for the cause of the people and led the huge movements of the Bengal and Kerala bandhs and won a historic victory in the Kerala election in 1965 despite the treacherous role of the Dange revisionists.

Since the release of Party leaders this year, the Party has been in the forefront of mass struggles—once more facing repression and jails. Once again the Government has started a slander campaign—only showing it is nervous of the growing influence of our Party.

The Party with its militant and revolutionary tradition calls

upon the people to rout the Congress and endorse the Party's electoral programme which alone shows a way out of the present critical situation.

Against the injustice and brutalities of the Congress regime, the Communist Party seeks to unite all opposition parties who express a desire to stand by the masses and fight Congress policies.

Knowing that division of the democratic opposition plays in the hands of the Congress and deprives the people of their legitimate victory, the Party is doing its best to get all other left parties together and face the Congress with a broad electoral front.

The Communist Party of India (M) calls upon all people to support the candidates of the Party and its allies and give a smashing defeat to the Congress in all states.

The Communist Party of India (M) stands for the following:

1. The sovereignty of the people. The supreme power in the state must be entirely in the people's representatives. Special powers of the President be annulled. Proportional representation to end Congress rule on the basis of minority vote and express the genuine will of the people.

Emergency to end forthwith. D.I.R., P.D. Act and all repressive legislations must be withdrawn. Complete restoration of the fundamental rights of the people; no detention without trial; unhampered freedom of conscience, religious belief, worship, speech, press, assembly, strike and combination, freedom of movement and occupation.

2. Immediate dismissal of all anti-people police officials guilty of atrocities against the people; police department to be reorganised and made responsible to popular will. Legal provision for judicial inquiry in all cases of police firing and complaints about atrocities.

3. Equal rights of all citizens irrespective of religion, caste, sex, etc., equal pay for equal work. Rights of Muslim minorities—cultural, religious, linguistic, services—to be specially protected in view of constant attacks on them. Abolition of all social oppression of one caste by another and of all social disabilities. Untouchability to be effectively punished. Special measures to promote the development of adivasis

and backward communities.

4. Effective gurarantee of the secular character of the state.

5. Tribal areas to have regional autonomy with regional government in the state concerned; or be constituted as full autonomous states where necessary; widest autonomy for the various states comprising the Indian Federation; post of state Governors to be abolished; for local administration directly elected local bodies with real powers and responsibility.

6. Equality of all languages as explained. Urdu to be given the status of a second regional language in the States of U.P., Bihar, Delhi and in states with sizable Urdu-speaking populations.

7. Free and compulsory education up to the secondary stage; promotion of girls' education; teachers' salaries and conditions to be improved.

8. Cultural media to be operated in the interest of promotion of people's culture and not as media of bourgeois-landlord culture.

9. Protecting the unity of India by promoting cooperation between constituent units, financial assistance to backward regions, study of different languages and above all by the promotion of common class struggle of the toilers against the bourgeois-landlord regime.

10. Taking over the landlords' lands and their distribution among agricultural labourers and poor peasants gratis; cancellation of debts owed by peasants, agricultural workers, small artisans to money-lenders and landlords; scaling down of other debts; ensure cheap credit for peasants and artisans to improve methods of farming by the use of improved facilities. Ensure adequate wages, house-sites, and living conditions—educational and health facilities—for agricultural labourers. Encourage co-operatives of small peasants and artisans for agricultural services.

11. Government to accept full responsibility for equitable distribution of food to the people of urban and rural areas; entire surplus of landlords and rich peasants to be compulsorily procured; state trading in foodgrains; small producers to be given attractive prices to part with their produce to government agencies.

12. Effective price-control through nationalisation of banks,

State trading in foodgrains, etc. Prices of all necessities of life to be drastically reduced. Protecting the people against effects of devaluation.

13. Drastic reduction in taxation. Taxation on all necessities of life to be abolished. Reduction in defence expenditure. Abolition of land tax, irrigation cess and other cesses and surcharges on uneconomic holdings.

Higher taxation on the richer sections in urban and rural areas, ceiling on urban income.

14. Moratorium on all foreign payments. Stoppage of all further American aid. Nationalisation of foreign trade, and all foreign capital in plantations, mining, oil, refineries, industry, shipping and trade.

15. Nationalisation of banks, monopoly concerns and other big industry wherever immediately necessary. A people's economic plan of development and self-reliance. Development of public sector with the utmost rapidity to overcome economic dependence. Control of private sector and profits in private sector. Balanced economic development of different regions.

16. Radical improvement of the living standards and working conditions of workers, employees, teachers and government employees by fixing a living wage, adequate pay-scales, full compensation against rise in cost of living by linking Dearness Allowance to cost of living index; social insurance at the expense of the state and capitalists for every kind of disability and unemployment; provision of decent housing; recognition of trade unions and their right of collective bargaining as well as right to strike for all workers including government employees; withdrawal of all anti-working class legislation; stoppage of all retrenchment and scrapping of automation schemes. Provision of Dearness Allowance for pensioners.

17. An independent foreign policy based on opposition to imperialism, especially American imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism and support to all freedom struggles; a policy based on opposition to nuclear war and imperialist wars and supporting peace and peace-loving countries, of firm solidarity with Afro-Asian people. Break with British Commonwealth.

Peaceful settlement of dispute with Socialist China and friendship between free India and Socialist China in the interest of Asian freedom. India-China understanding to be made the

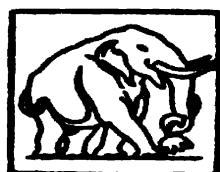
basis of a broad front against U.S. imperialism.

Peaceful settlement of dispute with Pakistan in the interests of strengthening the freedom and independence of both countries.

Firm and unqualified support to the people of Vietnam in their glorious struggle and forthright condemnation of American aggression. Firm steps to defeat American attempts to spread the war in Asia.

18. Replacement of the present bourgeois-landlord state led by the big bourgeoisie by a people's Democratic state led by the working class.

The Communist Party of India (M) looks upon the elections as a part of the great struggle that our people are waging against the Congress rule. These historic struggles stretching from Bengal to Kerala and Andhra to Punjab are transforming the situation and isolating the power-hungry Congress.⁹ The fate of the country, our freedom and independence, is being shaped in these mighty battles heroically fought by our people in the teeth of firings, lathi-charges and police terror. Only the people's might can rebuff American imperialism. Only the people's struggles will defeat the anti-popular policies of the Congress and clear the road to democracy and prosperity. The Party pays its homage to the innumerable martyrs who fell in the battle against Congress tyranny. It assures everybody that the Party will not rest till people are victorious.



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